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The Week

AN UNUSUALLY long list of important events took place both at home and abroad during the seven days ending January 26, nearly all of them coming under the heading of bad news. The dispute between civil and military authorities in Japan resulted in the fall of the Cabinet, which seemed likely to be replaced by a military dictatorship of the blackest sort. . . . In Soviet Russia there was seen another of those famous public trials so inexplicable to the Western world, in which sixteen men, several bearing honored names in revolutionary history, vied with each other to confess a vast plot, in which they implicated Leon Trotsky. Its purpose was to betray the USSR into the hands of Germany and Japan, with cession of territory and the overthrow, temporarily at least, of the socialism to which these same defendants have hitherto devoted their entire lives. . . . The Little World War went on in Spain with a sickening slaughter of soldiers and civilians alike. It became clearer that Germany and Italy, whatever they may promise, will continue to pour in money and men in the effort to help Franco and his Moorish mercenaries to destroy the Spanish government. . . . France made another effort to buy peace with Germany through trade concessions and loans, an effort that seemed foredoomed to failure. . . . The Nanking government in China continued to send ultimata to the Chinese communists and then to postpone the action threatened; some reports indicated peace was in sight. It seemed clear that the Chinese regarded developments in Japan as the worst possible news for them. . . . Another inquiry into Jewish-Arabian relations in Palestine dragged to its close with little hope that anything would be done to end the present impasse. . . . President Roosevelt and Walter Runciman discussed Anglo-American relations including, presumably, trade, tariffs, neutrality and war debts.

PRESIDENT Roosevelt took the oath of office for the second time, in the midst of a driving rainstorm, exposing himself to the elements courageously but foolishly in order not to disappoint the spectators. His inaugural address was another of the brave sermons about the rights of the common man that he knows so well how to preach. . . . Another great flood in the Ohio Valley killed 100 or more, rendered 600,000 homeless and did property damage of many millions. . . . The deadlock in the General Motors strike was continued as the company refused to negotiate, with the sit-down in progress; John L. Lewis asked the administration to help the strikers and was denounced for this indirectly by the President and directly by many newspaper editorial writers most of whom, it is fair to suppose, have been hostile to labor from the beginning. . . . The maritime strike in Atlantic and Gulf ports came to an end, primarily because the strikers' funds were exhausted; on the Pacific Coast the ranks held firm as the strike neared its fourth month. . . . Another racket trial got under way in New York City, this one centering around the restaurant business. . . . Senator Pittman introduced what may fairly be regarded as the official administration neutrality bill, making embargoes compulsary in regard to arms and ammunition and optional with the President in regard to practically everything else. . . . The Senate espionage committee produced additional evidence of widespread use of spies and stool pigeons by large industrial firms. . . . Senator Wagner prepared to introduce another

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housing bill, despite the four-year record of the administration's failure to do anything effective in this field.

THE long continued, indeed the perennial, quarrel between the militarists and the civilians in Japan flared out last week. Even the inflexible Japanese censorship, which is on the whole the most effective in the world, could not prevent a rising tide of protest over the results of military policy: a disastrous and mounting burden of taxation for military purposes and for the operation of conquered territory on the mainland—which thus far, at any rate, has proved a liability and not an asset. The government fell, although the Diet has not been dissolved at this writing. The new Cabinet seems certain to be one dominated by the military forces. This means increased pressure on China, a firmer alliance with Germany and a stronger likelihood of war with Soviet Russia. It means, also, still greater burdens on the Japanese population.

TESTIMONY given by Federal Relief Administrator Hopkins some time ago at a secret session of the House Appropriations Committee has just been made public. It reveals President Roosevelt's intention to make a drastic cut in the WPA rolls between February and June of this year. The number employed by WPA has already been reduced from about 3,000,000 to 2,200,000, and Mr. Roosevelt intends to cut another 600,000 off by June. The monthly expenditures will be curtailed from $151,000,000 by about one-third, to $103,000,000. There is of course no guarantee whatever that private industry will be able to absorb this number. No allowance is made for drought relief, although there is every indication that another serious situation is coming in the states between the Mississippi and the Rockies. There is also no allowance for the flood, although it will cost the federal government millions, some of it WPA funds. If those dropped are unable to find jobs, they will be turned back to local relief, which in many parts of the country has again reached and passed the limit of its resources. The dismissals, of course, will tend to depress general wage levels and to halt the march of recovery. For at least two years of his first term, Mr. Roosevelt was sharply criticized for his constant assumption that things were about to get better and that legislation could be written on that basis. He has gone back to this philosophy, with a vengeance, and it will be only good luck if his action does not cost the country dear.

PRESIDENT Roosevelt, in his inaugural address pleased those persons who like generalities, displeased those who had hoped for more specific statements regarding the problems facing the country. Standing bare-headed in the rain, demonstrating his ability to "take it," the President began his address by recalling the anxiety of the country four years ago and comparing it with the more hopeful attitude today. He took some issue with those who look with complacence upon our recovery. It was won, he said, under the pressure of more than ordinary circumstances. The going will be harder in the future because "dulled conscience, irresponsibility and ruthless self-interest already appear." He pledged to lead the people of America along the road they have chosen to follow: moving toward a goal which will not be reached until the millions of underprivileged Americans are lifted above mere subsistence levels. These are fine hopes and fine aspirations. No one can take issue with them. It is obvious, however, that a wide gap exists between the word and the accomplished fact and we wait to see how the President proposes to bridge it.

IF THERE is anyone left who doubts that industrialists make cold-blooded preparations to crush labor's attempts at collective bargaining he got another rude shock last week. The La Follette Senate subcommittee on civil liberties brought out that the National Metal Trades Association has a "war chest" of $214,928 to provide strikebreakers and labor spies for its 928 members, and that these funds are invested in tax-exempt government bonds. The Association destroyed its records and operatives' reports about a year ago, although they previously had been kept for years; of course it denies that the La Follette committee's investigation caused this. Nevertheless, Senator La Follette and his aides got at a few more interesting facts. After the passage last June of the Byrnes law, making it illegal to transport strikebreakers across state lines, the Association sent "recruiters" into states where it had members, to build organizations there. In the case of one plant, sixteen of the forty-eight strikebreakers provided had criminal records. The Association coöperated with Army Intelligence, Navy Intelligence and the Department of Justice, though the man who testified to this had one of those witness-stand bad memories. After digging this up the La Follette committee inserted in the record the names of more than 100 operatives of the agency, and James Matles, an organizer for the machinists' union, left in a hurry for Paterson, New Jersey, to start a clean-up. He said one of the stool pigeons was going to take a leading part in the meeting he was headed for. "That is, he thinks he is."

THE award of the Nobel Peace Prize to Carl von Ossietzky had the happy effect of getting him out of jail, but it is now clear that the Nazis are not prepared to let him go free in any real sense. The report of two English doctors who went to Germany to investigate von Ossietzky's health several weeks ago agrees with the latest press dispatches. Both say he is still under close surveillance and will not be allowed to leave the country. The doctors state that although when they were in Germany the government had announced that von Ossietzky was a free man and could go to Oslo to receive the prize

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"if his health permitted," he had no passport. They themselves were constantly harassed by the Gestapo, and were not permitted to see or examine Ossietzky, or to deliver to him messages from the London Royal Institute for International Affairs and other organizations. Now the latest information is that preparations have been made to transfer the $40,000 peace-prize fund from Oslo to a Berlin bank. Whether Ossietzky himself, under extreme pressure, is transferring the money, or whether an attempt is being made to get it into Germany without his consent, cannot be told at this time. There could hardly be a more sickening irony, however, than the use of this money for building Nazi cannon.

THE seamen's strike in Atlantic and Gulf ports ended on January 24, although several of the issues involved will be considered by the National Labor Relations Board. Perhaps the chief reason for calling it off was lack of funds. The press, which on the whole has been hostile to the strikers, interprets the action taken as a defeat for them. Whether this will prove to be true, only the future can tell. The strikers themselves believe that they have made several important advances. They have taken a long step toward driving out the reactionary leadership of the union which for years has been far more tender toward the shipowners' interests than toward those of the rank and file. Some wage increases were attained. In particular, strong protest has been registered with the public against the "fink" books, required of seamen under the present law, books which demand a continuous record of employment and make it the simplest matter in the world for shipowners to blacklist those engaged in a strike.

OUT of Arkansas itself comes a report on sharecropping by the Arkansas State Policy Committee, a non-political body of public-spirited citizens of that state. There is indication that Governor Bailey intends to accept the report as the basis of his administrative policy. The study points out that more than half the farm acreage in Arkansas—54 percent—is now cultivated by tenants. . . . In its concrete proposals for remedying the economic misery of sharecroppers, the report places its main reliance on the Bankhead bill for federal aid in financing the purchase of farms so that tenants may attain the status of owners. A housing program by state or federal agencies—or both—is called for in the report, without specification as to details, and it is recommended that food production be increased by free distribution of seeds and state supervision of food-producing activities, that education be related to the practicalities of the immediate environment and that health services be extended. Abolition of short-term (particularly one-year) leases is called for, an honest system of keeping sharecroppers' accounts is earnestly recommended, and the report ends with a sturdy declaration in favor of civil liberties, the right of suffrage and the right to organize that is one of the most heartening things to come from Arkansas in many months. The report seems to us weakest in placing its chief reliance on helping individual tenants to purchase individual farms. To reach a substantial majority of clients on this basis would require very large (and unavailable) sums, and the whole logic of modernized, mechanized agriculture in the South points toward coöperative or collective farming.

THE cause of the Spanish loyalists is subject to such vicious misrepresentation all over the world that it is a pleasure to welcome an official report from an impartial source of the highest standing. The League of Nations appointed a health commission to investigate hygienic conditions in the territory held by the government forces. The chairman of the commission was Dr. A. Lasnet, a member of the French Academy of Medicine, a conservative in politics and a member of the Roman Catholic Church. The official report, just published by the League, says "the state of health is satisfactory . . . the population is adequately nourished . . ." and pays high tribute to the energy and skill of the medical profession in preventing outbreaks of any kind when "none of the causes usually productive of epidemic outbreaks has been lacking." The commissioners recommend that motor coaches be sent to the Spanish government to assist in evacuating civilians from the military danger zones. After covering the strictly medical aspects that they set out to study, the commissioners could not refrain from commenting on the human elements involved. The report says, "The situation in Madrid is truly extraordinary, and only an eyewitness can appreciate the paradox of a great city still swarming with people and the life of which continues unabated under the dreadful menace of shellfire. . . . The population's morale is remarkable. . . . Everyone goes about his ordinary occupation. Market gardeners come to the markets as usual with their push carts. . . . All sanitation services are working. The town is regularly cleaned: drinking water is abundant and of excellent quality."

RECENT good news about civil liberties: The board of trustees of the village of Ossining, New York, passed a resolution declaring that in future an ordinance prohibiting the distribution of handbills should be applied to commercial advertising matter only. Last August four members of the American League Against War and Fascism were fined under the ordinance, but on appeal last week the fines were remitted, the decision was reversed. . . . The Massachusetts Institute of Technology announced that it was working out the details of a plan to exempt conscientious objectors from military training, formerly compulsory at the institute. . . . In a comprehensive decision temporarily restraining the police of Jersey City from prohibiting meetings of the Communist Party, Vice Chancellor James F. Fielder declared January 20 in Chancery Court that it was the right of "every citizen to

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belong to a party organized for a purpose hostile or in opposition to existing government and to advocate a change in the government by lawful means." . . . Bad news: Japan refused to allow the Jooss ballet to tour that country, presumably because of the anti-war character of the ballet's most famous dance, "The Green Table." . . . The New York Society for the Suppression of Vice, through John S. Sumner, is attempting to prevent by court action circulation of James T. Farrell's latest novel, "A World I Never Made." . . . Radio station WHK, of Cleveland, Ohio, censored part of a speech delivered by Paul Miley, representing the United Automobile Workers of America, and station CKLW, Windsor, Ontario, refused to allow Wyndham Mortimer, of the same organization, to deliver his speech at all, on the general ground that it was controversial.

Mr. Lewis and the Auto Strike

THE DEADLOCK in the General Motors strike continues, as this issue of The New Republic goes to press. The officials of the company refused to confer, despite Miss Perkins' efforts to persuade them to do so, until the sit-down strikes have ended. The strikers, on the other hand, believe that the company broke the terms of Governor Murphy's truce, by agreeing to separate negotiations with the anti-union Flint Alliance. This action was taken while the union was in the midst of taking out the sit-down strikers, a process that necessarily required several days.

We take it for granted that the strike will be ended by some sort of settlement, before very much time has passed. It is costing both sides too much to be allowed to drag on indefinitely. What will be the terms of the settlement it is impossible now to predict. The point to remember is that General Motors, the Wall Street forces that stand behind General Motors and, indeed, big industry and ownership throughout the country, are all just as bitterly anti-union as they ever were. As several people have recently pointed out, American business is at least a generation behind our British cousins in this regard. The British have learned over many years that the way to get along with labor is to encourage strong, comprehensive and ably led unions and to negotiate with them in a reasonable spirit. What General Motors and similar firms in this country actually want is no unions at all. If they can't have that, they want company unions, which only pretend to serve the workers' interests. Whenever a real union appears, they do their best to break it up by sending in spies and saboteurs and by firing and blacklisting the leaders.

The reaction to Mr. John L. Lewis' request for administration support, last week, must be looked at in the light of the foregoing facts. It is quite true that his impromptu remark came at a moment when it embarrassed the President and was therefore indiscreet, though its indiscretion hardly justified Mr. Roosevelt's sharp comment a few hours later. It is obvious that the President of the United States must not personally intervene in a serious strike unless and until it is perfectly sure that his intervention will be successful. For him to try and fail would not only be an unendurable blow to his prestige, but would be followed by an extremely ugly situation. Mr. Roosevelt has already "intervened" in the strike indirectly, through Miss Perkins, Mr. Grady and Governor Murphy.

While we agree that Mr. Lewis was tactless, we do not agree with the storm of angry comment on his action that was witnessed in the American press. Most of that comment has come from newspapers that were anti-union anyhow and were looking for every possible excuse to attack the workers. The fact that the General Motors Corporation is one of the country's largest advertisers, spending many millions annually to buy space in newspapers and magazines, does not make the attitude of the press any prettier.

For the fact remains that Mr. Lewis is right and what he said was true. The President has time and time again pledged himself and his administration to support genuine collective bargaining. That support has been written into one piece of legislation after another, from the NRA to the National Labor Relations Act. It is a cornerstone of the entire New Deal. It is unthinkable that it should now be abandoned. The only question is how it shall be applied, and the only right answer is, through a genuine union representative of the genuine desires of the workers.

The same press that jumped on Mr. Lewis so gleefully is continuing to argue that the United Automobile Workers represent only a minority of the employees of General Motors. We see no reason to doubt Mr. Homer Martin's repudiation of this charge, but even if it were true, we still think the course of justice and common sense would be to deal with the union as the spokesman for all the workers. Is America's memory so short that we have already forgotten the dismal experience of the President's agreement in the automobile industry? That agreement was an attempt to do exactly what Messrs. Sloan and Knudsen now propose: to give representation to every group, large or small, genuine or fake, that called itself a union. It was an abject failure which broke down before it was even under way. What earthly reason is there now for making the same mistake again?

Much is being heard of the illegality of the sit-down strike, and there are brave words about rushing through a Supreme Court decision forbidding such things. Writers like David Lawrence and George Sokolsky discuss the strike as though the men who are staying in were an invading army, determined to destroy the plants for all time, instead of being workers just as anxious to get back to their jobs as anyone is to have them do so. The debate over legality seems to us entirely off the point. The

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real objection to the sit-down is that it is effective; the employers are willing to grant to labor any weapon except one that works. It is perfectly plain that General Motors' objection to the sit-down is that they don't want to settle with the union.

In all this cloud of words, it is as well to stick to first principles: the best status for industry is genuine collective bargaining. The attempt to bring this about through a multitude of weak unions has never worked and never will. The UAW is the strongest and most ably led union the automobile industry has ever seen. The obvious sensible course is for the industry to come to terms with it, and get back to work.

Flood

FOR A world most of whose news was already gloomy enough, the flood on the Ohio River has added another item on the dark side. About a hundred persons are known to be dead, 600,000 are temporarily homeless, and the property loss will certainly amount to several hundred million dollars. As we write, the entire population of Louisville and Paducah, aggregating 360,000 persons, may have to leave, and the same measures will be taken in several other cities. Food, clothing and shelter are inadequate; there is great danger of typhoid and other filth diseases, and the influenza epidemic will probably cost many lives that could have been saved under normal conditions.

In several respects, this flood is worse than that of last April. The earlier calamity cost 175 lives and rendered 425,000 persons homeless, but it was spread over a much larger area, including Pennsylvania, New York and New England. At Cincinnati, this week's flood on Tuesday was eight feet higher than the previous record, set in 1884.

As always, the question remains to what extent the damage could have been avoided, and is therefore the result of unwise human policy. Professor Paul D. Sears commented last spring that throughout the entire area then subjected to flood, bad farming methods had largely destroyed the precious top layer of soil which, bound together by grass roots, holds back the water after excessive rain or snow. H. H. Bennett, director of the United States Soil Conservation Service, estimated that the last fourth or fifth of the flood's violence results from faulty agriculture; it is this last part, of course, that does most of the damage.

City-planning experts, assembled in New York while the present flood was at its worst, commented that "spot zoning" was responsible for much of the damage in the river towns. Cities are not planned or zoned as a whole; if they were, low lands in danger of inundation would be kept restricted against residential or business use. (In most towns, only the poorest people live in the flood danger zone, and the catastrophe to them when the waters rise is correspondingly greater.)

We can prevent flood damage if we are willing to pay the price; it means billions spent on soil conservation, billions more on flood control and the inauguration of city, state and regional planning on a scale never contemplated thus far.

Another Russian Trial

THREE important trials have taken place in Soviet Russia since the assassination of Sergei Kirov first brought reports of a widespread revolutionary movement among "Trotskyist" elements. Of these the most important are the trials of August, 1936, and January, 1937.

In August, sixteen individuals were tried, found guilty and executed, among them in particular, two noted Old Bolsheviks, Zinoviev and Kamenev. These sixteen defendants made confessions which many individuals throughout the world found simply unbelievable. They admitted a widespread plot to assassinate leading members of the present government, and charged that Leon Trotsky was a member and director of the conspiracy, coöperating with the Nazi regime in Germany. They told how Trotsky had sent instructions into Soviet Russia written in invisible ink on the back of a magazine, how he had smuggled in funds and how five persons went to Russia, with passports forged through the coöperation of the German police, for the purpose of murdering Stalin as well as several other Soviet leaders.

Trotsky denied these charges *in toto* and demanded an investigation of his alleged complicity by some impartial international group whose findings would carry weight. His followers in all countries—and they constitute a surprisingly large group, all things considered—have insisted not only that Trotsky is innocent, but that the same thing was true of the self-confessed conspirators who were executed. The general argument was that either these men sacrificed themselves in order to carry out Stalin's policy, divert attention from the miseries of the population of the USSR and build up hostility to Germany or, alternatively, that they had been tortured into making a series of false confessions. It was suggested that their families and friends may have been in prison and that the alleged conspirators had told their nonsensical stories under the promise, presumably a false one, that if they did so, these hostages would go free. To all this, of course, supporters of the present Soviet regime replied with sweeping denials. They pointed in particular to the impossibility that any group of men could confess separately to a complicated series of falsehoods without repeatedly contradicting one another.

The third trial, which began last week, was if anything even more unbelievable and yet more authentic than the second. There were again sixteen defendants, including Karl Radek, outstanding Soviet journalist; Gregory Piatakov, former assistant commissar for heavy industry; Gregory Sokolni-

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kov, former vice-commissar for foreign affairs and Ambassador to London; and L. Serebryakov, former assistant commissar of communications. Two others not at present on trial seem likely to meet the same fate as the chief group, Nikolai Bukharin, recently editor of Izvestia, and Vladimir Romm, who until a few weeks ago was Washington correspondent of the same paper.

The crimes to which the present group of conspirators confess are even more amazing than those admitted last August. The plot now revealed was, we are told, for the destruction of the present government through conspiracy with Germany and Japan. Germany was to get the Ukraine and Japan, Sakhalin and part of the Pacific littoral of Siberia. (It was especially mentioned that Japan must be guaranteed plenty of oil from Russian sources if she went to war with the United States.) Plans were made to spread disease germs among Russian soldiers and civilians in case of war. As was also confessed in August, there were elaborate schemes for espionage, sabotage and the assassination of Soviet leaders.

Trotsky is again implicated in all these confessions. Piatakov says he flew to Oslo and conferred there with Trotsky in December, 1935. Romm says he carried five letters from Radek to Trotsky and conferred with the exiled leader "in a dark alley near a park" in Paris. (The conspirators, it seems, did not want Japan and Germany to retain indefinitely the territory they were to get. They hoped somehow to drive them out, and to reëstablish socialism in Russia, at some time in the future.)

The daily dispatches from Moscow making these revelations are matched by daily denials telegraphed from Mexico by Trotsky. Again he repudiates all charges, demands an impartial investigation and offers his correspondence files for that purpose, saying they are complete except for "unimportant sections stolen by the GPU." Why, he demands, was not the story about Japan and Germany brought forward last August when the earlier group of conspirators were tried? Obviously, because it has just been invented. As for Romm, he says he never met him in his life.

It is of course impossible for anyone sitting in New York to pass a judgment that is worth anything on these Russian trials. It is equally obvious that such an investigation as Trotsky demands is unlikely to be held, or to have any value if it were. Thirty-four of those accused of being the chief conspirators are already dead or are under the shadow of death. Trotsky himself would be the sole witness before such an inquiry and his denials on the stand would be no more and no less convincing than are his denials in the newspapers. Even if he were guilty, his correspondence files of course would not reveal this fact; when you conspire to overthrow the government of the largest country in the world, you do not put your plans on paper and keep a carbon copy. The other theories, that the men arrested were tortured into false confessions, or lied to save others held as hostages, seem more improbable today than they did six months ago. Most improbable of all is the theory held by the foreign editor of Time Magazine, and so far as we know by nobody else in the world, that Trotsky and Stalin have a firm and friendly understanding, that Trotsky is Stalin's left hand, fomenting world revolution while Moscow officially pretends to frown. Mr. Walter Duranty of The New York Times knows as much about Russia as any foreigner. He attended the latest trial and has apparently been forced to the conviction that the confessions are true. If you find them incredible, he says, you do not know the Russian temperament; and he advises you to go and read Dostoevsky.

One hardly needs to say that whatever interpretation of the course of events one accepts—and it seems to us that the weight of the evidence supports Mr. Duranty's view—the whole episode can only be considered a disaster. If it were true, and could subsequently be proved, that the confessions of the accused were not genuine, the harm done Soviet Russia throughout the world would be beyond calculation. But even if you concede that the confessions are true, the effect is not much less serious. It shows that some—and a startlingly large number—of the Old Bolsheviks in whose loyalty and heroism the world has been taught to believe, could be led into a position where they repudiated everything for which they had previously fought. It shows that the present regime has had many more enemies, and more implacably hostile enemies, within its own ranks, than anyone could have believed possible. It gives aid and encouragement to the fascist forces in Italy, Germany and Japan at a time when it really does begin to seem true that the world is divided into two camps, fascist and democratic, and that democracy is fighting for its life. It reveals, incidentally, the value of free political expression for opposition views under the forms of political democracy as a safeguard against plotting of this sort. Whichever interpretation you accept of the Soviet trials, the tragedy involved in them is more than merely Russian; it is a tragedy for the whole world.

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EDITORS

BRUCE BLIVEN MALCOLM COWLEY R. M. LOVETT
GEORGE SOULE STARK YOUNG

TREASURER: DANIEL MEBANE

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

HAMILTON BASSO H. N. BRAILSFORD LEWIS MUMFORD
JOHN T. FLYNN WALDO FRANK E. C. LINDEMAN
W. P. MANGOLD JON. MITCHELL JOHN DEWEY
REXFORD G. TUGWELL

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In Catalonia

BUT FOR the activity at the Capitanía and the barracks, and the movement of troops to and from the front, one would scarcely be aware, even in these decisive days, that the people of Barcelona and Catalonia are engaged, along with the rest of the Peninsula, in a struggle for their liberty and their very survival. In Madrid the civil war has all along held the foreground. What social change was occurring was hardly visible to the naked eye. This has been true, in varying degree, of the central provinces generally, and, since the removal of the government, of Valencia.

The difference came in part from geography; in part, too, from local tradition and working-class orientation. In Spain proper, where labor is Marxist-led, the goal is the preservation of constitutional democracy; in the Northeast, where Bakunin and Proudhon predominate, the objective is a new social order, at once, without waiting for the military decision. For the Catalonians the army insurrection is not an unmitigated calamity; it is before all else an opportunity. Therefore to them the nineteenth of July is memorable less for the abortive *Putsch* than for the transfer of power to the people. In the Center events are dated as "before—or since—the civil war"; in Catalonia the phrase is, "Before—or since—the revolution."

In a multitude of ways—in its origins, its temper, its ideals, its leadership—the Catalonian revolution is unique in the history of social upheaval. It has but little resemblance to the Russian one with which international fascism is at such great pains to identify it. There are no soviets in Barcelona or Gerona, or even in Lérida, perhaps, I should say, least of all in Lérida. It is not a communist revolution, nor a socialist, nor yet an anarchist one. No single party has been the architect of it, nor so much as any single social class. I have seen nothing that resembles dictatorship in Catalonia, either of the proletariat or of anybody else. All the socially useful groups in the community have lent a hand in the building of the new social machine, and all participate through representatives roughly proportioned to their numbers in keeping it functioning and in the control-organism at the center.

Politically the parties that share office in the Generalitat range from the FAI—an anarchist federation considerably sobered by experience—to the Stats Catalá, separatist, nationalist and even chauvinist, with the intervals filled up by the Trotskyist POUM,[1] the Unified Socialists (Third International) and the Left Republicans of President Companys. Although the CNT, the labor confederation sponsored by the Anarchists, is far and away the largest and most vigorous in this region of Spain, it neither pretends to run single-handed the Catalonian economy nor aspires to do so in future. The UGT, sponsored by the Socialists, has been growing rapidly. The major industrial structure is in the hands of the workers, and small trade and industry belong to those who owned them before July 19—to the shopkeepers, artisans and small manufacturers who, attached to the Republic, did not flee in panic when the *Putsch* failed.

For the social revolution in Catalonia was a consequence—not the cause, as the fascists and their friends would have us believe—of the abortive military insurrection. The workers and the trade and political groupings behind them (including the Generalitat government) resorted to collectivization in self-defense. For several days after the fascist uprising all business was at a standstill. The reason was that on the morrow of the outbreak (in many instances, on the *eve*) owners, directors and managers of the larger enterprises had suddenly vanished. Some of them were merely timid souls frightened by rumors of "communism"; others had chalked up an unenviable record as employers of labor and during previous disturbances, notably that of October, 1934; not a few were known to have had a finger, financial or other, in the present plot. The Generalitat Council, faced with the danger of a prolonged economic tie-up, issued a proclamation warning the refugees to return at once on pain of having their plants confiscated. The call having remained unheeded, President Companys, on July 25, appealed to the workers to resume their jobs. They did not have to be asked twice. The revolution had come to Catalonia—and in varying degree to the rest of Spain—in the form of a war measure.

How all this has come about and how it works may be best illustrated by an example. The transportation system, for instance, of the city of Barcelona—trams, buses and underground—was long ago unified into a single monopoly. The company, originally Belgian, was some eight years ago all but entirely bought out by the local banks, so that only a negligible fraction of the capital was by last July held abroad. It is not to be wondered at that when the smoke of insurrection had cleared away the fourteen members of the board of directors, the managing director and the traffic director were nowhere to be found. The corporation's record both for public service and in its labor relations was one of the worst in all Spain—and that is saying a good deal. Though fares were high at all hours and excessively so after ten o'clock at night, wages low (the average pay envelope seldom rose above 200 pesetas monthly) and traffic so abundant that the cars were always overcrowded, the company's budget

[1] In the latest government reorganization, the representatives of POUM were dropped.

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was chronically unbalanced and the present trade-union administration inherited, when it took over the business last July, a large indebtedness for current, fuel and other supplies, and no reserves.

The CNT management almost immediately increased the electrical rolling stock 25 percent by adding 80 new cars. It has more than doubled the wages of the majority of the 4,400 workers, while reducing hours from 48 to 40 a week. It has abolished the excess charge for the night hours, and has since November 15 instituted a special reduced fare for wage-earners. Nevertheless, and though it is gradually paying off its inherited commercial debt, it is breaking even. The committee assures me that it will presently be able, thanks to increasing traffic, to begin saving toward an amortization reserve.

The workers' control committee enjoys the widest autonomy in the exercise of its functions and the fullest confidence of the men by whose votes and in whose name it performs these functions. Its relations to the community as a whole were in the beginning less satisfactory. In the early weeks there was considerable friction between it and the public authorities. Plain men who for years had been indoctrinated by anarchist orators, they were inclined to take the words "workers' control" a trifle too literally. They failed to see why "outsiders" should meddle in their affairs, why they should have to give an accounting to anyone. It took much argument and persuasion to bring it home to them that what they called "their affair" was a community concern and their control of it a public trust; that, moreover, like any other service or industry, transport did not and could not exist in a vacuum but was interdependent with the general economy.

For many weeks debates of like nature went on in nearly every plant, shop or office throughout Catalonia, particularly in those numerous enterprises where the workers and their committees were of mixed CNT and UGT composition. Their educative value, to speak of no other, can hardly be overestimated. They removed the threat of discord.

These negotiations and the revolutionary realities which gave rise to them bore fruit in due time. A pact between the two trade-union federations was signed on October 22.

Two days later—the Council having in the meantime been reconstituted so that it actually did embrace all the social forces of Catalonia, notably those of the Anarchists and the CNT, the Socialists with the UGT, and the POUM—this principle was, in the collectivization decree of October 24, reduced to specific terms. Article 12 of the decree reads:

> The enterprise committees will bear in mind in the execution of their trust that the process of production forms part of the general plan elaborated by the General Industrial Council, and will coördinate their efforts with the principles which govern the prosperity of the industry to which they belong as a whole. In determining the margin of profit and the general conditions of sale, in purchasing raw material, and in all matters pertaining to plant amortization, working capital, reserves and the distribution of profits, they will likewise conform to the decisions of the General Industry Councils.

Two examples may be cited to illustrate how these ideas are applied in practice. The hotel industry (which includes also restaurants and cafés) is directed by a mixed-control committee in which both trade-union federations are represented. The entertainment business—theatres, bull-fights, cinemas, opera, concerts—is, like traction, exclusively operated by the CNT syndicates and the central committee elected by them. Both trades have suffered from recent events. The hotels and the more expensive restaurants have in particular been hard hit by the flight of their best clients, both native and foreign, by the conversion of some of the largest houses (the Colon, the Ritz, the Palace and many others) into party headquarters, militia billets, hospitals, refugee homes and the like, and by the scarcity of certain foodstuffs. In these circumstances it was hard necessity rather than persuasion or self-discipline that obliged both of these industries to function as single trusts. Some of the hotels and entertainment places are prosperous, others run at a loss. Thanks to collectivization and unification, it is possible for the personnel of the trade as a whole to work and live, the deficit of the less fortunate units being made up from the surplus of the more active ones.

On the whole, the urban worker offered but little resistance to the larger implications of the revolution. It was—and remains—otherwise in the country. The leaseholders are, unlike the industrial proletariat, but little developed socially. They are neither anarchists nor Marxists, even if many of them did join the UGT after the unsuccessful rising of October, 1934. They are peasants; and like their fellows in Russia and elsewhere, they have a keen property hunger which perpetual frustration has only served to intensify. Revolution meant but one thing to them—to get possession of the land. They would not hear of the proposal to collectivize the farms into a single countrywide land trust. Even the compromise scheme of making each village community the ground proprietor within its precincts, which has now been formulated into a decree, does not answer their aspirations. Having been left free to work their patch individually or in common, the majority have preferred to stay out of the collectives. They argue—not without justice—that neither the character of the land, which is hilly, nor the nature of the crops (wine and fruit) lends itself to collective cultivation. The new Generalitat Council does not insist, any more than did the old one. But in the interest of the community, whose vital concern with the food supply is evident even to the peasants, it has created purchase and sale syndicates to which every farmer is required to belong and which may in time serve as a back-door to effective collectivization of the countryside. That depends on the fortunes of war.

Barcelona. M. E. RAVAGE.

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High Van Sweringen Finance

EVERY Senator, every Representative, every depositor in a defaulted bank, every bank superintendent, including the Comptroller of the Currency, should make it his business to set aside ten minutes to read what follows here. I have tried in as few words as possible to put clearly the amazing story brought out by Senator Burton K. Wheeler about a certain financial episode in the weird history of the Van Sweringens. The Van Sweringens are dead, but there live certain claims against their allies which are as yet unliquidated.

It would be better, of course, if the reader could find the time to follow this story in the more than 200 pages of testimony and exhibits in which it lies buried. But he hasn't the time or the testimony. So I have tried to compress it into a few paragraphs. The legislator, the bank depositor who reads this may then decide for himself whether the trail of these strange adventures should be pursued farther.

In 1930 the Van Sweringens wanted some more millions for the complex and audacious series of holding companies and subsidiary corporations they were juggling. They had a corporation known as the Cleveland Terminals Building Company. Hereafter we shall speak of it as the CTB Company. It owned directly or through its subsidiaries that extensive collection of real-estate properties which the Vans were exploiting in Cleveland—including the Terminal Towers, Cleveland Hotel and all their properties centering around the old public square of Cleveland. It was just a big real-estate development which had been hit an almost fatal wallop by the great market collapse of 1929.

The Guaranty Company of New York, after much negotiation, finally agreed to underwrite a note issue of $30,000,000 for the Vans. A new corporation was organized, called the Van Sweringen Corporation. To it was turned over the stock of the CTB Company and 500,000 shares of Alleghany Corporation stock. When all this was done we had the Van Sweringen Corporation—owned by the Vans—itself owning the CTB Company and 500,000 shares of Alleghany Corporation stock. And this Van Sweringen Corporation was now ready to borrow $30,000,000 by issuing notes which the Guaranty Company would sell to the public.

A circular or prospectus was put out which described the CTB Company as owning a lot of real estate in urban Cleveland valued at $46,000,000. Here were the facts about that. The CTB Company at the end of 1929 had a balance sheet which showed that it was insolvent. It showed liabilities $803,000 in excess of assets. But two and a half months later, just a day or two before the prospectus for the $30,000,000 note issue was made up, the physical assets of the CTB Company, consisting of real estate, were, by a twist of the wrist and the flourish of a fountain pen, written up $25,000,000. In addition, according to Senator Wheeler, a mortgage of $9,500,000 owed by the CTB Company and still unpaid was mysteriously written off. The $30,000,000 of notes were then offered to the public, without disclosing that the real property had just been written up by $25,000,000.

The Guaranty Company officers testified before Senator Wheeler that they had never inspected the balance sheet showing the company insolvent. Furthermore Senator Wheeler produced a letter from a Cleveland partner of the Guaranty Company, written at this time, saying that the Van Sweringens "are at the most believed in Cleveland to have overreached themselves in real estate and this proposition will be looked upon as an attempt on their part to liquidate their real-estate holdings just as Alleghany liquidated their railroad holdings. But whereas Alleghany was floated in a popular railroad market, real estate in Cleveland, at least at the present time, is in a depression *and the Van Sweringen realty in a considerable depression.*" Yet this was the moment, with the country in the depression, when the real-estate holdings of the CTB Company were doubled in value on the books.

The $30,000,000 of notes were then offered to the public. The offering was by the Guaranty Company. This was an affiliate wholly owned by the Guaranty Trust Company. The Guaranty Trust Company was made trustee to act for the bondholders. In short, the Guaranty Company acted for the Van Sweringens, on one side of the counter; the Guaranty Trust Company, which controlled the Guaranty Company, acted for the bondholders on the other side of the counter.

Now the indenture securing the note issue had several clauses in it for the protection of the bondholders. One clause limited the amount of cash and marketable securities which the Van Sweringen Corporation could dispose of. At least one-half of all such cash and securities had to be kept intact for the benefit of the note-holders. But while the Van Sweringen Corporation, which issued the notes, had to do this, its subsidiary, the CTB Company, did not. The principal security behind the notes was the real estate owned by the CTB Company. Yet this company could sell or mortgage this real estate without hindrance. And that is what it did. Immediately it borrowed $10,500,000 and mortgaged a group of buildings for that amount, thus cutting down the security of the note-holders. It was then at liberty to use that $10,500,000 in any way it chose. It could gamble away the $10,500,000 and lose it. And that is what it did.

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The Van Sweringen Corporation could also lend its cash to its subsidiary. And while the Van Sweringen Corporation under the indenture could not fritter away its cash, it could lend it to the CTB Company and that company could fritter it away. And that is what it did. This is the kind of protection a bondholder gets when his interests are looked after by the same group of companies that represent the promoters.

Now what became of the $30,000,000 which the public paid the Van Sweringen Corporation for the notes? The Van Sweringen Corporation got this money and handed over the entire $30,000,000 to its subsidiary, the CTB Company. And what did the CTB Company do with it? It proceeded to use it for speculation in the stock market. It also bought a lot of stocks from another Van Sweringen holding company—the Vaness Corporation.

The Vaness Corporation was at one time the top holding company of the Van Sweringen interests. It was what they called their "basket." It owned a lot of stocks of Van Sweringen companies which it had acquired before the stock-market collapse. Now the stocks were declining rapidly. So it proceeded to dump some of these stocks into the CTB Company. The Vaness Corporation held shares in the Higbee Department Store. These were sold to the CTB Company for the same price paid by the Vaness Corporation for them before the collapse.

The General Securities Corporation was another Van Sweringen personal holding company or basket. It owned 600,000 shares of Alleghany Corporation stock. The shares were priced on the market at $18. The General Securities Corporation sold these shares to the CTB Company for $20—$2 above the market. The CTB Company turned over to the General Securities Corporation $1,200,000 more than the shares were worth in the market.

The Van Sweringens were carrying on astounding operations in the stock market. Most of this was done through the brokerage house of Paine, Webber and Company. It ran into hundreds of millions perhaps. Much, if not all, of this was done on margin. And at one time the Vans owed the Paine, Webber firm $32,872,000 on margin accounts. This situation was made possible by their innumerable accounts in the Paine, Webber firm. Apparently these Van Sweringens were in need of countless names under which to do business. They had a great number of corporations. They had accounts in the brokerage house in the names of all these and many of their subsidiaries. They had accounts in the names of other people. And they had accounts in the names of numbers—how many, heaven only knows. One reads of Account No. 700, Account No. 955. There were not enough practical numbers. So they had Account V-8, V-10. And in the names of these numerous companies they bought and sold hundreds of thousands, yes, millions of shares on margin—buying and selling the same stocks the same day by the thousands, stocks of their own companies and other companies. And now at this point Senator Wheeler has lifted the curtain on the way these men operated and the kind of aid they got from their banker-allies in Wall Street.

Under this $30,000,000 note indenture, the Van Sweringens were obliged to keep with the Van Sweringen Corporation cash or securities to the value of one-half the original issue. Hence they placed with the Van Sweringen Corporation 500,000 shares of Alleghany stock valued at $30 a share or $15,000,000—half the $30,000,000 note issue. If the collateral thus deposited fell below the required value they would have to replenish it in cash or securities

Now as soon as the note issue of $30,000,000 was put out, the Van Sweringen interests resumed their difficulties. Alleghany Corporation continued to decline in price. For this reason, therefore, the Van Sweringens were interested in keeping the value of Alleghany stock up as near 30 as possible. So they resorted to the grand old scheme of pegging the price on the stock market. Indeed, one letter written by the Vans at this period indicates that the Guaranty people—the trustees of the bondholders—actually suggested doing this.

So the Vans began to buy and sell and thus to manipulate the price of Alleghany stock. They would buy, for instance, 3,600 shares on one day and the same day sell 3,200 shares. On another day they sold 10,000 shares and bought 14,000 shares of Alleghany, all through Paine, Webber and Company. And it was to carry on these operations that they were using a lot of the millions of the CTB Company obtained on the note issue. Keep this in mind. The $30,000,000 came from the public note-buyers. To protect them the Vans had to deposit the $15,000,000 of Alleghany stock. Then, when that stock started to fall, the Vans used the money obtained from the note-holders to bolster the stock in the market and give it a fake value.

Behold this clever little incident. By August, Guaranty Trust vice-presidents were talking about the possibility, even probability, of a Van Sweringen and CTB bankruptcy. The Vaness Corporation was in bad shape in the office of Paine, Webber and Company. Its stock account was seriously undermargined. Paine, Webber took it up with the Vans. This was on October 1, 1930. On October 7, the Vaness Corporation sold 600,000 shares of Alleghany stock to the CTB Company for $12,000,000. The $12,000,000 was then transferred to the Vaness Corporation's account on Paine, Webber's books, thus rescuing it, while the CTB Company held the shares and found itself thrust into the position of a creditor of the brokerage house.

But these Alleghany stocks continued to go down. By the end of October the Vans were so heavily in debt to the Paine, Webber firm that action could no longer be postponed. Yet the Vans had no further funds with which to rescue themselves. They faced a crash. The brokerage firm was imperiled. The New York bankers, led by Morgan, were frightened. Such a crash at that moment would crack

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the whole financial world wide open. At this crisis the Morgan firm made a loan of $39,500,000 to the Van Sweringens. Of this $23,500,000 went to the CTB Company and $16,000,000 to the Vaness Corporation. These two companies paid $19,496,000 of this to the Paine, Webber firm and thus bailed them out.

When they turned the money over to the CTB Company the Vans withdrew from the Van Sweringen Corporation the Alleghany shares deposited there under the indenture. These shares numbered 900,000 by this time. The shares were turned over to the bankers as collateral. Other shares, constituting control of the Alleghany Corporation, were also turned over. It was those shares which were finally sold to Mr. Ball, the glass-jar manufacturer of Muncie, for 14 cents a share.

Now the Van Sweringen Corporation and the CTB Company are in bankruptcy and the noteholders have lost over $15,000,000.

But here is a vital point. In August, 1930, a Guaranty Company vice-president was discussing a probable bankruptcy of the Van Sweringen Corporation. Yet three days later he and another vice-president were discussing a campaign to sell these notes to bankers at the American Bankers' Association in Cleveland in September. Whether they pushed that campaign or not there is no evidence. But they did sell a lot of these notes to many banks. And Senator Wheeler put into the record a list of banks which bought such notes and are now closed.

Here, then, are some facts for various readers:

For bank depositors, stockholders in these closed banks. You have not been paid back your deposits. Have you considered whether or not you have any rights against the bankers who sold these notes and similar ones to you and the trustees who were named by those bankers to act for you? No one stockholder or depositor can enforce his claims. Perhaps no one closed bank can act. But what if all stockholders and depositors acted together to bring pressure on the proper banking authorities to enforce your claims against these bankers?

For bank superintendents and the Comptroller of the Currency. You are administering these closed banks. They hold countless millions of notes and bonds and stocks similar to these Van Sweringen notes. As trustees for the state and the depositors, what steps have you taken to enforce against the bankers and trustees the claims of depositors because of these performances in connection with security issues on which these banks have lost millions?

For Representatives and Senators. This single disclosure of Senator Wheeler, the most ably pursued investigation of a financial deal and only one of many presented by his committee, ought to be worth many millions to abused bank depositors. Will you let this investigation lapse? Will you let the bankers kill it? And will you fail to take the necessary measures to prevent such activities in the future? What can you do? You cannot know until this committee has completed its great labors and studied a path for you to follow.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

Complaints: II. Bernard DeVoto

AS FOR the literary Right, it hardly exists any more. Irving Babbitt is dead, and Paul Elmer More writes little; and there is no longer any real school of criticism on the Right. In some ways this is a disadvantage: the more conservative critics were also more thoroughgoing. The academic background here was in some ways a very good thing. The great handicap of such reviewing as is being done by, say, Mary M. Colum in The Forum or John Chamberlain in Scribner's is that, instead of writing a full-length study of an author, they are obliged to improvise a *causerie* dealing with a lot of miscellaneous books, grouped together merely because they happen to be new. The reviewer who dealt regularly from a distinct point of view with subjects of serious interest seemed to have become extinct.

Then a conspicuous exception appeared in the shape of Mr. Bernard DeVoto, the new editor of The Saturday Review of Literature.

Mr. DeVoto is evidently something new, and he deserves our respectful attention. First of all, it must be said that it is a pleasure and a relief to have regular weekly reviewing done by a man who can write, who ranges widely and observes acutely, who studies his authors thoroughly and tries to sum them up, and who is completely independent. Mr. DeVoto has already succeeded in making The Saturday Review quite interesting. The whole magazine is coming to bear the stamp of the new editor's point of view and special interests, with the result that it is acquiring a force and a definite personality which it never had before. And these interests and point of view have already produced certain things that are valuable. Mr. DeVoto is a Westerner who has been trained at Harvard but who has never repudiated the West. On the contrary, he has stuck to it stubbornly, applying what he has learned from it to his study of the rest of the world and championing its cultural importance. He has written some extremely interesting papers on Mormonism (Utah is his native state); and in his book on "Mark Twain's America" he has thrown some new light on the life of the frontier and on Mark Twain's literary sources. And he has maintained among the

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literary phenomena of his own time a toughness of mind that is uncommon. No popular reputation passes current with him till he has attempted to assay its worth for himself; and he seems to shed fashionable shibboleths as easily as a really first-rate raincoat sheds water. Furthermore, he has the academic training which for a good man is probably an asset and which has enabled him, for example, to clean up without remorse on the psychoanalytical biographers who have aped Strachey. We must, therefore, be thankful for Mr. DeVoto. He is trying to do something which no one else is doing, and he has qualifications for doing it well.

Yet precisely because Mr. DeVoto has undertaken this kind of responsible criticism, we expect of him more than he has yet given us. We expect of him an intelligible basis of taste and an intelligible general point of view. He *sounds* as if he were being discriminating in his discussion of the relative merits of books, yet the standards by which he judges them remain obscure; he *sounds* as if his strictures on other people's doctrines were based on some deeply thought out philosophy of which he was very sure, yet though we keep on reading him in the interested expectation of finding out what that philosophy is, the revelation never breaks. He is positive and plainspoken on the surface, but when we try to go below the surface, we find ideas that seem erratic and confused.

Mr. DeVoto as a critic may be examined most satisfactorily in his book on "Mark Twain's America," which is the most elaborate of his literary studies and typical of his methods and habits of mind. This "essay in the correction of ideas," which, as I have said, contains much that is interesting, labors under the disadvantage of being one of those books that have been written, not primarily to present the author's own view of the subject, but to combat somebody else's view. This is characteristic of Mr. DeVoto, who always seems to approach his subjects with a chip on his shoulder. In this case, the writer with whom he is trying to pick a quarrel is Mr. Van Wyck Brooks, the author of "The Ordeal of Mark Twain." Now it is true that Mr. DeVoto is able to correct some minor errors on Mr. Brooks's part and at least one serious one: the assumption that during the period in the last century when communistic and religious social experiments were flourishing, America had taken no part in the movements represented by "the Tolstoys and the Marxes, the Nietzsches and the Renans, the Ruskins and the Morrises." And he is able to correct the gloomy negative picture painted by Mr. Brooks of the West of Mark Twain's time by filling in the more cheerful aspects. But one ends by deciding that Mr. Brooks is a kind of King Charles's head for Mr. DeVoto: one of those obsessions which give rise to the suspicion that the obsessed is under the influence of his bugbear.

For, after all, by the time Mr. DeVoto is done, he seems to have confirmed most of the assumptions which were the foundations of Mr. Brooks's case: that the life of the frontier was savage and taxed the pioneer's endurance and that Mark Twain's humor (as a consequence, says Mr. Brooks—Mr. DeVoto does not explain but deplores it) tends to run to the disgusting and the horrible; that the genteel tradition of the East had an emasculating influence on letters and that Boston and Mrs. Clemens constituted another kind of ordeal.

And where he tries to ignore Mr. Brooks's findings, he obviously exposes himself. Mr. DeVoto, for example, is quite ready with firm judgment to throw out all the literary deadwood in Mark Twain which is the basis of Mr. Brooks's contention that Mark Twain as an artist never developed properly; but he hardly touches at all on the rankling indignation at institutions which is Mr. Brooks's very solid evidence that there was an undeveloped Tolstoy in Mark Twain. And, although certainly some of Mr. Brooks's psychoanalytic interpretations do seem a little far-fetched, he does at least try to establish a relation between Mark Twain's choice of subjects and methods of treating them and his character and social background; whereas Mr. DeVoto merely exclaims that Mark Twain was a great artist and a fine old boy, and, aside from tracing sources, leaves his relation to his work unexplained.

I dare say that Mr. Brooks *has* taken too seriously the incident related by Mark Twain's biographer, in which the young Sam, much given to mischief, is made to swear by his mother at his father's deathbed that he will always thereafter be a good boy. But the dualism which Mr. Brooks attributes to Mark Twain is there in his work as plain as day—in the antagonism, for example, represented for Huckleberry Finn by Miss Watson and respectability, on the one hand—to which Tom Sawyer is more or less committed—and the Nigger Jim and the raft, on the other; and this dualism does account, as Mr. DeVoto scarcely attempts to do and in fact scoffs at the notion of doing, for the dualities of "Pudd'nhead Wilson" and the Siamese twins.

What is more serious is that Mr. DeVoto completely evades the central question which Mr. Brooks is most impressive in illuminating: the question of Mark Twain's pessimism. Mr. DeVoto's whole explanation of this pessimism is merely that Mark Twain had seen a lot of life and that, since he was no fool, it had made him gloomy. But so had Dickens and Dostoevsky and a great many other people, who nevertheless did not become pessimists. The pessimism of Mark Twain is one of the blackest cases on record. Such documents as his thoughts on the death of his daughter, which Mr. DeVoto does not mention, are rare in the history of Western civilization. We know that there were special causes for the pessimism of a Swift or a Leopardi; and Mr. Brooks is certainly well advised in looking for a special cause for the pessimism of Mark Twain—and he is convincing in finding it where the

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causes of Swift's and Leopardi's are to be found: in a crippling and unsurmountable frustration.

Involved with all this is Mr. DeVoto's failure to give an adequate account of "Huckleberry Finn." Mr. Brooks may have praised that book too scantily, but he did tell what it was about; whereas if you believe Mr. DeVoto, it is simply a marvelous story about floating down the Mississippi. Mr. DeVoto devotes eleven pages to "Huckleberry Finn" and yet manages never to mention the theme which gives it its hold on the emotions and makes it great: the contrast between Huck's natural instincts and the distortions of civilization.

The truth is that Mark Twain's books, though funny, are in general sad—just as that other great Westerner, Lincoln, who was also funny, was sad (and evidently also a dual personality: see Herndon's "Life"); and Mr. DeVoto neither explains nor even faces this fact. Of course the West of Mark Twain's period was more hilarious and more exciting than Mr. Brooks in his earlier and dolorous phase represented it; and Mr. DeVoto's correction is in order, but the kind of whooping it up for the good old days which Mr. DeVoto does in his chapter called "Washoe" is just as emotional and just as "literary," that is to say, just as poetic, as Mr. Brooks's tragic darkness. In an essay in "Forays and Rebuttals," Mr. DeVoto denounces literary "fantasy," which he opposes to historic "fact": "The fantasies of the literary historian are frequently beautiful and nearly always praiseworthy, but they are a form of protection or of wishful thinking, a form of illusion and even of delusion," etc. Yet in what sense is Mr. DeVoto's vision of a mining town in Mark Twain's day "fact" which would make Mr. Brooks's vision "fantasy"? Mr. DeVoto's book is full of rhetoric—the "incandescence" of the West, for example, which is always being brought in to do duty for more exact description; parts of it sound as if they had been written for declamation. In its less happy moments it resembles a Hollywood picture made from a novel by Fannie Hurst. Mr. DeVoto is even capable of throwing out Mark Twain's own testimony (page 124) when it does not fall in with his own vision. And at one point he seems to present bear and badger-baiting as evidence that the life of the pioneer was not devoid of gayety and charm. (Observe, also, that in the above quotation, he is trying to psychoanalyze somebody; whereas one of his great objections to Mr. Brooks is that Mr. Brooks tried to psychoanalyze Mark Twain. So in Mr. DeVoto's essay on Malcolm Cowley's "Exile's Return," he does not hesitate to psychoanalyze the "lost generation.")

Furthermore, it seems to me that Mr. DeVoto's main grievance is almost entirely unfounded. He complains that American criticism has written down Mark Twain as a failure and insufficiently appreciated his work. But the fact is surely that the period which he complains of has been the period which has appreciated Mark Twain most. The older critics tried to outlaw him from serious literature; but, beginning with Professor Phelps's essay on him and going on through John Macy and Mencken, there has been a growing respect and admiration. Stuart P. Sherman's chapter in "The Cambridge History of American Literature," published in 1921, though rather uninspired, certainly takes Mark Twain seriously. Even Brooks does not belittle Mark Twain: he dignifies him by making him tragic; and the negative influence of Mr. Brooks and his disciples has been negligible in comparison with the influence of Mark Twain's writings themselves. The debt of Sherwood Anderson and Ernest Hemingway to Mark Twain is obvious and has been amply acknowledged; and the main stream of American humor has followed the channel he deepened. Also, it is surely not true that it is the Croly-Brooks view of the frontier which has dominated in the writing of this period. On the contrary, the folklore and romance of the West have, if anything, been overdone. Haven't we heard enough by this time about Sutter and Paul Bunyan and Billy the Kid? The Wild Bill Hickoks and Calamity Janes are now Hollywood heroes and heroines. And the demand for American folk humor has actually now reached a point where the author of Caleb Catlum has found it profitable to manufacture it synthetically.

What, then, is Mr. DeVoto's real grievance? This indignation at other people's errors which seems to prevent him from stating his own case, this continual boiling up about other people's wild statements which stimulates him to even wilder statements of his own, have been characteristic of all his criticism.

Well, this may be partly due to the Westerner's grudge against the Easterner. And I should say that a certain amount of it was due to the peevishness of the literary professor against the writer outside the academic enclosure. Stuart Sherman had the same sort of thing, which evaporated after he came to New York. It is a combination of disapproval, often on sound enough grounds, of what seems to them cheap and superficial in the work of writers ignorant of the classics and with no training in the standards of scholarship, and of envy of the freedom of the non-academic. And the critic who is or has been a teacher cannot help adopting toward his readers the tone which he has acquired in the classroom. That Mr. DeVoto has been conditioned by the academic environment seems to me to be indicated by the fact that in his essays on education, where he is dealing with a world in which he has lived, whose difficulties and hopes he has shared and whose victories he has helped to win—even in criticizing that world severely—he gives out both heat and light; but that when he encounters Greenwich Village, for example, which has also had its hardships and its hopes, its ignominies and its victories, he stiffens with the distrust of a stranger.

But Mr. DeVoto is not merely, or fundamentally, a supercilious professor. There is evidently some

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other reason for his antagonistic attitude toward his contemporaries. He is evidently arguing from a point of view from which all of them seem to have some guilt in common. He must be, or there would be no sense in his doing as he recently did in a review of Carl Van Doren's "Three Worlds"—in his sweeping them all together and accusing them of "misrepresenting" America, ascribing to each one all of the opinions of all the others. He must be in possession of some precious secret which the rest of us badly need if he is not to be included himself in this general potpourri—he is the same age as the "Younger Generation" of the twenties, with whom he makes so furious a quarrel, and he has been writing novels for years—but is able to stand apart and to know that he himself is saved, while he watches the Gadarene swine.

But what is this point of view, this secret? Mr. DeVoto never lets us know. He only hints, and on the basis of his hints one is unable to construct anything that hangs together. One gathers that he is definitely opposed to certain tendencies which he regards as prevalent and which he characterizes variously as "progressive," "Utopian" and "religious." These tendencies evidently have to do with the desire to see the economic system modified in such a way as to safeguard human society against the social inequalities, depressions and wars which, visibly in Europe, as Mr. DeVoto writes, are destroying civilization itself. It is Mr. Brooks's concern about these problems which seems to constitute Mr. DeVoto's chief objection to him. Well, some of the people whom Mr. DeVoto lumps together are no doubt Utopians; but others are Marxists, and Marx and Engels exploded Utopian socialism almost a century ago. Yet all, it appears from Mr. DeVoto, have in some way been untrue to America. And not only the ones who want to get rid of capitalism—equally the ones, like Hemingway, who simply went abroad and wrote, and the ones, like Sinclair Lewis, who simply stayed at home and criticized. All the works of this period apparently, according to Mr. DeVoto—Lewis's caricatures, Hemingway's idyls, Brooks's diagnoses, O'Neill's tragedies, Dos Passos's social webs, Fitzgerald's drinking parties, Sherwood Anderson's waking dreams, Edna Millay's lyrics—all misrepresented America.

But in the interests of what is Mr. DeVoto speaking? Who or what has been betrayed? A group, so far as one can gather, which Mr. DeVoto calls the middle class. These people, it seems, have been going about their business, doing the solid work of the country and maintaining its moral soundness, while the writers have been jeering at them and deserting them and trying to bemuse them with Utopian visions. It is hard to understand why this solid middle class should have bought and read so many copies of the books of the writers named above, who Mr. DeVoto says misrepresent America.

What then? All is dim after that. Fitful chinks in the clouds of words show principles leaning at strange angles which seem to change between chinks. For example: "Revolutions are always struggles between special groups; only propaganda tries to make them seem the will of the people in action. The people remain mostly unharried by them, neither willing nor acting, and in the end pay tribute to the old group, victorious, or to the new one which has cast it out. Even agrarian revolt has little to do with the agrarians in a mass." Then another barrage against the intellectuals, under cover of which no troops seem to advance. Then a vision—very vivid and solid, this one—of the rise of the Mormon community in Utah—how beginning with something in the nature of communism, it developed a privileged hierarchy and finally succumbed to the financial and industrial interests—from which some kind of moral seems supposed to be drawn. But what is it? Something about dictatorship and how all dictatorships must take the same course? Something about the enslaving effects of capitalism? Something about how Salt Lake City exhausts the possibilities of human society? One would think that the absorption of the communism of the Mormons into the development of capitalist society precisely proved the Marxists' case. There are many things we should like to ask Mr. DeVoto; but he never tells us enough about what he thinks for us even to argue about it. He can only tear his hair and, lumping us all together like one of those composite pictures that look like nobody, pretend he is arguing with us.

I am sure that I am being unfair to Mr. DeVoto, but I have written in the hope of smoking him out. He has been influenced by the Italian sociologist Pareto, and as I haven't read Pareto, I haven't this key to his system. I read the number of The Saturday Review which Mr. DeVoto devoted to Pareto, but the articles, including Mr. DeVoto's article, threw very little light on the subject. I gather that the discipline of Pareto enables you to detach yourself from social groups and to study them dispassionately from the outside. Is that what Mr. DeVoto is trying to do with the American frontier, about which he becomes so wildly excited? I gather from the article by Croce that Pareto is anti-democratic. But if Pareto is anti-democratic, why does Mr. DeVoto worry about the forgotten man in the West?

Let him stand and unfold himself. What does he want? If he does not believe in the improvement of society, how does he expect then that things will work out?—and what have the values of literature got to do with it? Let him not merely refer us to Pareto. Let him not merely tell us that we are Easterners (especially as a great many of us are Westerners) who will never understand the frontier. It is a long time since anybody new in this field has really had anything to say; and if Mr. DeVoto has something to say, he may be sure of an attentive audience.

EDMUND WILSON.

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Live Respectably

ONE EVENING at Simpson's on the Strand I sat at an empty table so starved for human society that neither beef nor mutton could still me.

After a while a young man slid into the chair opposite. He was just a young man. His hair was polished. He wore a good suit. He was obviously human.

He never lifted his eyes, of course. With a surreptitious glance at my order, he repeated it to the waiter in an undertone, and then slid into his paper the way he had slid into his chair.

It was the time England, too, was doing a slide of its own, off the gold standard. I had been reading the same edition of the same paper, and I could see him going over the same surfaces with his eye like a lawnmower. But occasionally he tipped a little glance at me. He was pretending to me that I wasn't there, three feet away, just as I was pretending to him that he wasn't there, even though we were sharing the same table, the same food, the same news.

For a while I stood it, but at length, suffering from repression, I opened my mouth. I addressed the Englishman. There was one impersonal topic that I knew to be common to us, namely, the gold standard, so, awkwardly enough, I ventured to blurt out, "And how do you feel about the gold standard?"

He heard me, and then an awful thing happened. He blushed. I believe he blushed from the waist up. I could not see the blood mount all that way, but it certainly rose in a flood to the roots of his hair. I blushed too. We sat there, face to face, blushing arduously, with that blunt question between us. I was so afraid that some other guest might suddenly glance up and catch us that I suffered acutely. I didn't know where to look or what to do. With his blush still surging, he tried some answer. I hardly heard it. I never really knew what he thought of the gold standard, but I guessed what he thought of me. He thought I was an Australian.

Now this intuition, that he thought I was an Australian, or at any rate a Colonial, has thrown a great light on the English mind for me. It was clear I had spilled a bean, or two beans. In the first place I had broken silence, bad enough, and then I had laid my Colonial hand on the Ark of the Covenant, which at the moment was housing the gold standard. The second act was the more repulsive.

It then dawned on me that a whole nation that is trained not to spill the beans has, in a certain sense, achieved a national culture.

The English ruling class understands this, and its technique will be studied by nations yet unborn.

The easiest way to keep a nation from spilling the aforesaid beans is to deprive them of beans. How completely Mrs. Simpson was kept out of the English news has, I am sure, escaped no one's lively attention. It was no small feat, in this day of pitiless publicity, to keep the lid on for about eight months. To have been the first to take the lid off would not, I conceive, have been very healthy, because the English do know what to do with anyone who takes the lid off. Even if they have to put the culprit into the House of Lords, sooner or later they teach him the technique of the lid. But for the impossibility of hand-picking Colonial news, impossible even to the most resolute of intelligencers, this particular exclusion of awkward news might still be being enacted.

But more remarkable is the handling of the beans, once they are spilled. It shows how a whole nation can be rallied.

The task of the English ruling class is not to be respectable itself. It is to keep its public respectable. To do this it must be prepared to make, and to offer up, sacrifices. If its great public became disillusioned, either with its history, or its Church, or its Royal Academy, or its Royal Family, or its apple dumplings, the game would have to be played in a different way. To keep the heart of the public sound, on the basis of the moral and Biblical superiority of the English people, is the absolute essence of the game. And this game must be played by the universities, by the law, by the Church, by the historians, by the press and by the British Medical Association. Critics may bob up, fellows like Lytton Strachey, but they are adders to be warned against and in the end to be stamped on.

Given time and privacy, almost anything may be smuggled into the Ark of the Covenant. You already find birth control there. You find the Deceased Wife's Sister. You find the remarriage of divorced Americans, not as a Church law but as a legal obligation laid, if not on a particular clergyman, then on his church building. In this Ark of the Covenant you used to find the gold standard, and now you find the off-gold standard. You used to find dominions, and now you find commonwealths. But the smuggling can't be done if you make the Englishman blush, and that is what the conservatives understand so perfectly.

As between the Archbishop of Canterbury (Glasgow and Balliol) and Mr. Baldwin (Harrow and Cambridge), I give the palm to Mr. Baldwin. The Archbishop is no paltry rival. His brother is an actor, and he is worthy of his brother. I thought it was a blemish in his famous broadcast to use the great occasion for drumming up business. The "craving for personal happiness" should always be decried, and it is permissible to extol the "Christian principles of marriage." But there are Cavaliers as well as Roundheads. Adultery is not unknown in England, since the army is so gallant and the air force so flighty and Jack's the lad when girls are sad to kiss those tears away. The uppercut about the ex-King's social circle "whose standards and ways of life are alien" seemed to me not according to the Marquess of Queensberry's rules, if one may recall the lamented Marquess.

No, there were blemishes, but how superb the performance. What a voice. What a diction, with

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good pure sentiments in good pure vowel sounds. What a cadence. It was as if the Ark itself were in soliloquy.

And only when Mr. Baldwin gilded the lily in speaking of a "great" gentleman did I feel he was less than perfect. The untutored public can be the meanest alligator in the world, and he got into the warm tank of royal intimacies with his entire public, embraced it, confided in its horny ear and lulled it to rest. One king was taken from its clasp, another put in its place, and only a sigh could be noted. The shyness of the whole people, their mixture of strength and tenderness, their ability to blush—he understands it.

The last time I was in Florida I missed seeing the brave man who puts alligators to sleep by stroking them on the belly. I hope he is still to the good, but if anything has happened to him, I'd like to nominate his successor. FRANCIS HACKETT.

Washington Notes

TVA's Morgan and Lilienthal—Mr. Willkie Gets Religion—Washington Takes a Look at Europe

AS THIS is written, Dr. Arthur E. Morgan is still chairman of the TVA. It is generally believed, however, that he cannot delay his resignation for more than a few days or weeks. Mr. Roosevelt's new, informal committee on power policy has a majority hostile to Dr. Morgan, and its forthcoming report is expected to make his withdrawal almost inevitable.

In many ways, his resignation will be a loss to the New Deal. He is the embodiment of traditional Americanism, and it is probably fair to say that he has become a sort of moral pontiff for the whole Tennessee Valley region. In his public speeches, and in his dealings with his subordinates, he has assumed almost the character of a Biblical prophet, castigating the sins of the present generation and calling for repentance. However, observers agree that his quarrel with Mr. Lilienthal has reached proportions that now threaten the TVA's existence.

Dr. Morgan's and Mr. Lilienthal's differences constitute one of the most intense and curious dramas of the New Deal. Their quarrel is hard to define in rational terms. Nominally, Dr. Morgan is the advocate of a power pool in the Tennessee Valley region, while Mr. Lilienthal is supposed to be against it. Except for Senator Norris, however, there is very little opposition among New Dealers to a power pool as an ultimate objective of TVA policy; Mr. Lilienthal, indeed, was one of the first to suggest that a pool be created.

Members of the TVA's staff say that the hostility between Dr. Morgan and Mr. Lilienthal goes back almost to their first meeting. Dr. Morgan came to the TVA, these informants say, with a far-flung program—almost a vision—of a new social order. It was a program, however, that was to be fulfilled less by governmental action than by the moral flowering of each individual in the Tennessee area. Mr. Lilienthal came to the TVA with a background of fighting public-utility companies in Wisconsin. He had no great concern for the moral future of the Tennessee Valley residents, but he did want to give them cheaper electricity.

In his statement of faith, published ten days ago in The New York Times, Dr. Morgan spoke of "people who are ruled by a Napoleonic complex, which leads them to use any method at hand, including intrigue, arbitrary force and appeal to class hatred." This must be taken as Dr. Morgan's present estimate of his fellow TVA director. Few observers would deny, moreover, that Mr. Lilienthal is a man of high ambition, and that he has fought the Commonwealth and Southern power system with all the wiliness at his command. However, Dr. Morgan himself has been an autocrat of a peculiarly difficult kind. Before adopting any course of action, he has invariably first convinced himself of its utter moral rectitude, after which it becomes impossible for him to compromise with the wrong.

Friction between Dr. Morgan and Mr. Lilienthal was perhaps unavoidable. Unhappily for Dr. Morgan, his dislike of Mr. Lilienthal forced him to assume an increasingly conservative position. Early last spring, he came to Washington to demand that Mr. Lilienthal not be reappointed as director of the TVA. Apparently it was a genuine shock to him to find that most New Dealers admired Mr. Lilienthal greatly and considered he had done a fine job. Mr. Lilienthal was reappointed and Dr. Morgan suffered an open humiliation.

About this time Dr. Morgan formed his strange and lovely friendship with Mr. Wendell L. Willkie, president of the Commonwealth and Southern system. Exposed to Dr. Morgan's moral persuasiveness, Mr. Willkie blossomed with unanticipated idealism, and publicly testified to a new sense of social responsibility. Dr. Morgan regarded him as a brand saved from the burning, or as the hundredth ewe lamb, and was proud of his handiwork. Out of Dr. Morgan's and Mr. Willkie's mutual admiration came the power-pool conference at the White House last fall.

Mr. Lilienthal's partisans, however, refused to be impressed by Mr. Willkie's conversion. They rudely asked why, if Mr. Willkie had been baptized in New Deal waters, nineteen subsidiaries of Commonwealth and Southern should have commenced a new injunction suit against the TVA, with the obvious intention of hamstringing its operations for another twelve months or more. This is a question that Dr. Morgan has so far been unable to answer. In the minds of most New Dealers, Dr. Morgan has identified himself with the utility companies. Despite their appreciation of his great gifts, they feel that he can no longer usefully remain as the TVA's official spokesman.

The Morgan-Lilienthal dispute has served greatly to sharpen the whole power controversy. A month ago, it was thought that Mr. Roosevelt would proceed cautiously with the St. Lawrence treaty, and it was predicted that, rather than risk a long-drawn-out fight, he would postpone asking for its ratification until a year from now. It is now reported that the treaty will be brought up in the Senate during the present session, and that all the force of the administration will be marshaled behind it. The hydro-electric developments that form a part of the St. Lawrence treaty affect the largest, richest power market in the country. If Mr. Roosevelt is victorious, he will have proved that he is indeed the master of the utility industry and its Wall Street backers, and the utility fight will be finally won.

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Mr. Runciman's week-end visit at the White House has made officials not optimistic, but at least less gloomy, about European peace. Partly as a result of Mr. Runciman's visit, and partly through direct information from London, there is no longer any doubt that England is eager to reach an agreement with Hitler, and is prepared to grant important concessions. England has no intention of returning Germany's former colonies, but it is ready to give Hitler substantial credits and trade advantages. Both Mr. Roosevelt and Secretary Hull are giving a large part of their attention to the peace moves being made in Europe, which they regard as of vital importance for America. There are persistent, but unconfirmed, reports that Mr. Roosevelt, as his own contribution to peace, is ready to discuss the war debts. Most members of Congress are mortally afraid of the war-debt issue, and it will require genuine political courage on Mr. Roosevelt's part to make the great reductions in the war-debt totals that will be necessary before a settlement can be arrived at. According to other reports, Mr. Roosevelt is no longer insistent on having the pound sterling stabilized at $4.86, and would be ready to consent to a slightly lower rate. These reports would be more cheering, however, if there were signs of an appreciation that Germany's future cannot be settled without the help of the USSR, and of a disposition to admit the USSR to the world's councils.

Washington. T. R. B.

High Tor and Highty Tighty

The Wingless Victory, by Maxwell Anderson. Empire Theatre, December 23, 1936.

High Tor, by Maxwell Anderson. Martin Beck Theatre, January 9, 1937.

IN ART, reality and the imagination come out eventually to be the same thing. No matter how far the material may be from the strictly factual, the surface actuality, no matter how near it may be to the actual surface, the prose minutiae, you will see that the full exercise of creative imagination can bring it into a reality. When by the creative process of art, something is there where something was not before, that something is what the reality consists in. It may be said too that no matter how far flown the imagination may be, the result will have reality in so far as it has completeness and organic unity.

Only the fact that Mr. Maxwell Anderson has done other plays of a different caliber could justify any notice of such a play as "The Wingless Victory"; it has not any reality at all, of any kind. A seaman, having failed with his family and in every Salem respect, has gone away, swearing he would return when he could buy the town. He now comes home, with a cargo rich enough for that and—hail "Java Head"—a Malay-princess wife (plus two children). He establishes himself in the ancestral house, lends money, sets up again the family business, all in vain: the wife—whose legal status the town doubts—the dusky brood, and the feeling that he may have been too happy in begetting them, will not go down with these cavilers, solid citizens and sour saints. And so, after a good deal of the vague rhetoric of egoes and moral cross-currents, we arrive at a crisis. The man must either give up the dark lady and send her packing on the ship again to the East, or lose all, even tea with the neighbors. He decides, after some versification, that the wife must go. On the boat again, the Malay maid has preserved a good Eastern poison, which serves for the children, maid and mistress; and the last moment finds the heroine dead in the arms of the hero, who, with a recalcitrant worthless brother, is now going to sail around till "his dust lies down with hers."

The ethical interlarding of the story, what with the theme of race prejudice, plus the theme of religious narrowness, comes to nothing. If you sail in from the sea with a dusky lady, uncertainly wedded to you, the town is no rarity that looks you over suspiciously. For Salem to be singled out in this respect may seem hard, but no matter. And almost anybody with a modicum of sense will see that, even in stage Salem, the flashing profundities of this heathen Malay convert remain vaporish: people who have won what standards they may have by hard discipline, ugliness, bitter lines, hot denials, could scarcely be expected to be bowled over by such prayers as this, delivered beside the first-act window (at a crucial moment dramatically):

> Dark oracles of heaven,
> that blaze and burn, swung by an unseen hand,
> forgive me if I give my god no name,
> for men have many. But there is one law only
> over the sun and tides, and He sits alone,
> giver of laws, and I worship Him, and ask,
> under what name is chosen, for those I love
> peace in this house. The terrible sea has been
> my child bed, and my children's cradle. Blood
> and a black treason lie at their beginning,
> and murdered men look down upon our sleep
> and curse, and will not live again, and yet
> these are the ways of men, and a woman bears them,
> forgiving, and a god forgives. What wars
> they make, what pitiful scars they leave, what eyes
> lie staring at your moon, and will not waken,
> this we have seen together, but these men-children
> are children still, and loved, and a woman's heart
> goes out to them, even guilty. Drive us no more
> for the evil we have done, let us eat our bread
> beyond the salt of weeping or the sea,
> these little ones and him I love, and I,
> here on this shore.

That is a long quotation, but it is necessary, or people who have not seen or read the play would never believe at what tired rhythmic patterns, superfluous images and lyric clichés this writing may arrive. It sounds like a Stephen Phillips version of an Arthur Symons translation of a decadent German versifying of a lax translation of Euripides. To its service, however, Miss Katherine Cornell has brought the translucence and the miraculous instrumental qualities of herself as acting medium. What this may mean, for or against the play, and for or against Miss Cornell, you will have to decide for yourself. The play is semi-tosh from start to finish, and the dying, analytical languor and the verse's cadence here and there are little help—all despite a situation potentially dramatic.

"High Tor," on the other hand, is a fantasy of many virtues. The theme of industry messing up things is familiar but not inorganic; the combinations of gnomic fancy, trade, centuries and stubborn lyricism are calculated for a genuine entrance into our hearts and acclamations. On the whole

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the evening is delightful, the dramatist's talent fantastic and genuine. Suggestions of "The Tempest" and divers versifications of spirits and escapes, Rip Van Winkles, love, and relative actuality, seem to detract nothing too much from the whole effect—Shakespeare himself did his borrowing—and I should say that there is a certain glitter to this story of the young man who would not sell his Palisades promontory to the trap-rock company, what with those ghostly Dutchmen and that Dutch ghost of love, Lise, wife of Mr. Byron McGrath's Captain Asher, serving as foils to the mingled modern elements of bank robbers, town fiancée and so forth. The general story of "High Tor" is something of spell and fantasy. The mingling of Broadway comedy and other elements, traditional and deathless, is a good sign. The drift and smile of Mr. Anderson's piece are moonlit and excellent. It has no little reality.

As for the performance, the casting of Mr. Harold Moffet and Mr. Charles D. Brown, as rock buyer and droll ghost, was a stroke of genius. Mr. Burgess Meredith gave an admirable performance of a part that might have been merely bumptious and overevident, since only true feeling on the actor's part could distinguish it from the long since banal. Miss Peggy Ashcroft, imported from London for the role of the ghostly young Dutch wife, shows many delicate qualities convincing for the role. But her reading of the yards of verse written for the character seemed to me to turn verse into something unnecessarily tedious. Must verse reading be panted, spit out and subdivided like this? Links of meter strung together on pauses! The frustration that comes from metrical disruption! She should listen to Mr. McGrath reading verse as it ought to be read.

Mr. Meredith broke down only once: after the Dutch ghosts were finally departed he had a few verses to say from a center-stage knoll of soliloquy. Whether this breaking up he did into four or five beats, pausing, enunciating, was intended to continue the pulmonations of the Ashcroft ghost, or whether some director order mucked up Mr. Meredith's own method, who knows? In general, however, he read the lines with that remarkable intuition for the sense, and that ever renewed reality of color and drama, that appear to be part of his great talent.

STARK YOUNG.

The Bandwagon

For light relief he lunches occasionally at the Athenaeum, but his heart is in the Church.—*From The (London) Sunday Times.*

Out of our sad crisis came some real good. The Continent was much impressed, and realized once more that we are not as other people.—*Collinson Owen in The Sunday Pictorial, London.*

But the palm goes to a firm making tear-gas bombs, which, according to information obtained by the Senate espionage committee, is said to have sent the following Christmas card to prospective customers:

To protect your men throughout the New Year
With that balance of power that criminals fear
Means only to budget a very small sum
To purchase the new —— Tear Gas Gun.
We hope you haven't lost a man
That could have been saved by the Tear Gas Plan.
Wishing you
A Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year.

At the top of the card was a tear-gas gun, and at the bottom a bright poinsettia.—*From The San Francisco, Calif., Chronicle.*

WOMAN'S WORK IS NEVER DONE

While the guests sat around Mrs. Sudler's dining-room, taking their tea comfortably, Mrs. Hodgkins . . . announced, "We women can accomplish endless progress toward peace if we try, and it is worth four days of every woman's time." —*From a news item in The Chicago Daily News.*

The first question asked came from a Goucher girl: "If the economic conditions are so bad, and there is bound to be a war, what is the use of girls getting married and bringing up families to starve and be killed off?"

Mr. Babson answered this question with the example of his own daughter and grandchildren. "When my daughter says that to me, I tell her to go have two more children." —*From a report of a speech by Roger Babson in the Johns Hopkins University Newsletter.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column and $1 will be paid for each item used. Address The Bandwagon, care of The New Republic.—THE EDITORS.

CORRESPONDENCE

Jews and Arabs in Palestine

SIR: The Royal Commission which is investigating the bloody events in Palestine is completing its work. There is no reason to expect that its report will in any way differ from the reports of previous investigations. Formal adherence to the Balfour Declaration will be reaffirmed, Jewish immigration will be curtailed, British imperialism will continue its policy of giving active support to Arab reaction and, at the same time, making empty promises to the Jews.

New events are in the making. The mandatory government is playing one part of the population against the other. The sad results are aggravated by the anti-Jewish activities of Arab fascism on the one hand, and by the failure on the part of Jewish leadership to adopt a correct policy toward the Arab masses on the other.

But the Jewish-Arab problem *can* be solved, and for the sake of the 900,000 Arabs and 400,000 Jews now in Palestine, as well as for the sake of the large Jewish masses driven to Palestine by fascist oppression and anti-Semitic persecution, it *must* be solved.

Antifa—the only international organization in Palestine—points the way to solution. By its very existence, Antifa demonstrates that there *is* a basis for Jewish-Arab solidarity.

Antifa aims to promote better understanding and foster peaceful relations between Jews and Arabs. It hopes to accomplish these ends by the establishment of Jewish-Arab economic and cultural institutions; by implanting the consciousness that both peoples have a right to live in and build the country; by organizing Arab workers in trade unions and by fighting for their admittance into the Histadruth (Jewish Federation of Labor). This program will offset the chauvinistic propaganda, accelerate the process of social differentiation among the Arabs, lay the foundation for an international labor movement in Palestine and create the forces for effective struggle against fascism and imperialism.

The Jewish-Arab delegation from Palestine, now visiting this country, appeals to all progressive elements. Jews and non-Jews alike, to support the activities of Antifa. Contributions may be sent to the American Committee for Antifa, 305 Broadway, Room 410, New York City.

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The delegation will make its first public appearance at a mass meeting Sunday evening, February 14 at the Center Hotel, New York City. John Haynes Holmes, Ernst Toller, Peretz Hirshbein and E. Auerbach will also speak.

CHARLES SHERMAN, Secretary,
New York City. American Committee for Antifa.

Irish Confetti

SIR: Some of the boys who wear dark glasses have reported that your publication recently printed an alleged review of my book, "John L. Lewis: Leader of Labor" [The New Republic, January 6]. I have not read it, since the so-called appraisal was done, I hear, by Edward Levinson, and though I have inured myself to pain, reading something by Mr. Levinson would be an indication of sadomasochistic tendencies. You see, my reply to Mr. Edward O'Brien Levinson, that fine broth of a man, must be on a personal basis; that is how he indited his touching little sonnet, which, had your caption writer but known, should have been headed "Sour Grapes." For, you really should know, Eddie O'Brien Levinson and I are acquainted. But like the farmer who fell in the manure pile, I was willing to forget it.

It would be too much to expect that the editors of The New Republic should learn Mr. Levinson boasted for weeks that he was going to get even with me in this review. A fine bond between us was severed when we both covered a recent building-service employees' strike and on one story Mr. Levinson was left at The Post. Since that time Mr. Levinson has, however, shown a fine restraint: he has never accused me of having shot Abraham Lincoln. . . .

It must be his Irish impetuosity which made Mr. Levinson write that I pronounced Duncan MacDonald and John P. White, "one-time mine-union figures," dead. I wrote "he beat President John P. White on an important issue . . . and the next man to get in his path was Duncan MacDonald, head of the Illinois Miners' Union, and no one seems to remember what either issue was since both have long since been dead." Translated into Gaelic for Mr. Eddie O'Brien Levinson, this still means that the issue is dead, not Mr. MacDonald, Mr. White, or, I almost said, Mr. Levinson. . . .

New York City. CECIL CARNES.

SIR: The only thing that matters about Mr. Carnes's book, my review of it and his protest, is that the book is utterly inaccurate and incompetent.

New York City. EDWARD LEVINSON.

A False Report

SIR: In my review of Liddell Hart's "The War in Outline," which appeared in The New Republic of December 9, 1936, I spoke of a report that Captain Hart was affiliated with the Mosley fascists. Now Captain Hart most kindly informs me that he in no way shares the fascist ideas and that the only societies he is "in any way affiliated with are such as are devoted to the defense of freedom or the pursuit of objective knowledge."

I deeply regret having given currency to a false and injurious report and I herewith offer my sincere apologies to Captain Hart.

New York City. HERMAN SIMPSON.

The Case of Glenn Frank

SIR: As an old advocate of academic liberty, I beg space in which to register a protest against the manner in which the Regents of Wisconsin University handled the case of President Frank. It is difficult for an outsider to get at the merits of such a controversy, but enough facts have been made public to warrant the conclusion that the Regents did not conduct the affair in a fashion calculated to give confidence in their judicial qualities or their ability to conduct an institution of learning. This much seems evident, entirely apart from the issues that may have been involved. The entire transaction reinforced a conviction which I reached from study and experience more than a quarter of a century ago, namely, that no board of lay trustees is fitted to conduct a college or university without the assistance and participation of faculty representatives. Until each institution has its academic senate and faculty representation in the determination of institutional policies, appointments and dismissals, we may expect the constant repetition of the unseemly controversies which mar academic life and endanger freedom of the spirit to inquire and expound. But, since we seem to take a lively interest only in quarrels, and little in principles and remedial measures, the prospects for the adoption of academic constitutions appear to be remote.

Washington, D. C. CHARLES A. BEARD.

From The New Republic Mail Bag

Some additions to George Soule's recent article, "Behind the Motor Strike," come from John J. Johnson, who says that as far back as 1933 some of the higher executives of Chrysler motors were advocating the thirty-hour week and had planned production on that basis under the NRA, but gave it up because the other companies wouldn't come in on it. This is one difference between Chrysler and General Motors, and the other is that Chrysler abandoned piecework about two years ago, since it is obviously out of place when work is geared by a modern production line to the speed of the slowest man or the slowest operation. Ford has never used piecework.

A student at the University of Wisconsin writes that the majority of students are indifferent to the dismissal of President Glenn Frank, and that the small group of strikers was organized by the conservative fraternity clique.

Simon Michelet, president of the National Get-Out-the-Vote Club, offers the following suggestions for revision of election and registration laws: repeal of the poll tax, still retained by ten states as a prerequisite of the right to vote; elimination of individual electors; simplification of the ballot; and employment by all states of the automatic voting machine.

Carl Alexander Johnson of San Diego, California, offers the suggestion that members of the Supreme Court be appointed for terms of twelve years only, so staggered that each President would appoint three Justices during his four years' administration and thus add "fresh impulse and outlook in keeping with the times."

Louise Davies of Ventura, California, believes that the state grants for libraries we urged in our editorial of January 6 should be supplemented by federal grants, particularly since the states most in need of aid to their libraries are least able to afford it themselves.

The Association of Hospital and Medical Professionals informs us of its charge that the fire at the Israel Zion Hospital Nurses' Home, in which Miss Anita Drummond was burned to death, January 17, was due to negligence on the part of the administration. Miss Drummond herself had reported to the Superintendent of Nurses the hazardous conditions of the home on the occasion of a fire ten days previously.

From Cliffside Park, New Jersey, Bruno Smyth writes that Bruce Bliven's appeal "For His Holiness" is like the appeal of Father Coughlin to the financiers to put Jesus Christ on the board of directors.

Mary Fox, the executive secretary of the League for Industrial Democracy, 112 East Nineteenth Street, New York City, informs us of the League's sixth annual discussion lecture program, beginning in January and February in a number of cities.

What's on the Air?

Descriptions of the President's Birthday Ball will be broadcast from various parts of the country, together with a short address by the President himself. Saturday, January 30, 11 to 12 P.M., NBC-Blue Network.

Ellen C. Wilkinson, Labor member of the British Parliament, will give her "Impressions of America." Monday, February 1, 6:30 P.M., CBS.

Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace will be heard on the National Farm and Home Hour. Tuesday, February 2, 12:30 to 1:30 P.M., NBC-Blue Network.

Public utilities and a power policy for America will be discussed at the Town Meeting of the Air. Thursday, February 4, 9:30 to 10:30 P.M., NBC-Blue Network.

All times given are Eastern Standard.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Dubious Battle

IN 1905, off Tsushima Island, the Imperial Russian Navy was practically wiped out by the Japanese in what this survivor calls one of the four naval battles of history. His book[1] is a good book, with much illumination and a rare, terrifying story; but the "battle" was actually a farce, so huge and pitiful that none may smile. The Empire was full of holes and the most to be said of its sea forces was that they floated. The Japanese had adopted the best equipment and trained their little men, their eternal seamen, to use it.

Losing frightfully in the war, Russia sent all the fighting ships she had left off on one of the wonders of the world, a 12,000-mile cruise around the Cape and up into the Sea of Japan—almost eight months, with coaling stations along the way hostile, supplies rotting, bottoms dropping out, what not. The author was an enlisted man and in touch with such others in the fleet as were "awakened." The villain of his account is naturally the system (though to be sure that isn't the whole answer to how a nation could turn out such funny seamen) and the prize package is Admiral Rozhestvensky, without whom much of the tragedy would have been impossible. He is always in the background, with his stunning incompetence and wrong head. He led the fleet unerringly to the enemy, left a standing order that brought it back into range whenever the Japanese mislaid it, and himself went undercover to wander miserably through the lower compartments of his flagship. On Coronation morning they went through Thanksgiving services, and then the Japanese battle line came down through the haze, and started to blast.

> Two large-caliber shells, entering by the gun ports, had exploded in the "Oryol's" casemate. . . . One of the starboard seventy-five-mm. guns was put out of action by shell splinters. Soon after, the port turret was destroyed. Then the forward casemate was devastated by a twelve-inch shell, which exploded the store of ammunition it contained. Coal dust, steam and smoke filled the inwards of the ship, making our eyes very sore. . . . Suddenly [in the forward turret] there came a dazzling flame, which rushed in through the loopholes of the observation tower. . . . A large portion of the muzzle of the port gun had been carried away . . . this great piece of metal, weighing a ton and a half, had been flung onto the fore-bridge, killing three bluejackets. Enemy missiles were exploding in all parts of the ship, destroying ironwork, knocking away handrails, breaking up boats. The yellow funnels showed black gaping holes. Suddenly, behind the stern twelve-inch turret, the deck burst, opened like stretched paper struck by a fist. . . . One of the gunners, falling down, crawled about on all fours crying: "Brothers, where am I wounded?" An enlarging splotch of red was visible on his white jumper, between the shoulder blades. His face grew livid. Then turning on his back he died. . . .

These are only the incidents, bald and noncommittal; but in the context, piling up in this ship and all the other ships, their sheer procession raises lurid shadows above the quiet pages, and you can neither read on calmly nor put the account aside. Men rushed frantically to free jammed hoists, stuff gaping holes in the bulkheads, put out fires, and the Japanese shells pounded with such precision and heat of explosion that the very paint on the armor plate blazed up and the armor warped, decks buckled in the heat and all above decks became an unrecognizable tangle, all the shells exploding in it raining a hail of steel splinters the length of the ship, and even after a man had been lugged down to the sick bay and one of these splinters taken from shoulder or stomach, it would be hot to the touch. And it wasn't so much the matter of death and destruction as that you didn't know what for, could not see or hear; you went through these actions in order that the ship might live, and the ship moved under a metal curtain of death. Shells might come up and be fired by hundreds but still nothing happened —the "Oslyabya" swerved out of line and turned over, the flagship "Suvoroff" staggered drunkenly off to one side, a great torch of fire, later the others—and the shells that went out might as well have been cotton, for the Japs kept steaming along as fresh as paint and everything was gripped in a nightmare of futile struggle. And here and there, to heighten it, sights never dreamed of on earth:

> Boatswain Voevodin, having succeeded in extinguishing a fire which had broken out in the paint room, went forward. The torpedo-hand, Vasya Drozd, came to meet him on the upper deck. Vasya walked swiftly, though stooping, holding one hand over the top of his head while waving the other as if to ward off shells. Whither away in such a hurry, this lean, long-legged dreamer? Anyhow, he stopped short in his stride to look at the enemy. At this precise moment the boatswain was knocked down by the wind of a shell. He rose, uninjured, and caught sight of something which, surrounded by gray smoke, was jumping like a young bear. . . . Vasya Drozd, with both legs shot off at the knee, was in the death struggle. His eyes anguished, his face twisted, he was bounding on the red stumps that were left him, trying (it seemed) to run, and fighting desperately for breath. A moment later he fell into the pool of his own blood. "Brothers, the ironclad is flying up into the clouds, up into the clouds," he cried. . . .

There is fine detail work here and there, as in Novikoff's memory of some lucid but unreal moment of lull in the blasting hours: "Going up to Engineer Vasilieff, I said to him: 'My mother reads Polish. Indeed she has about twenty Polish books which she knows almost by heart.'" And after all but three of a crew of seven hundred had gone down or died of exposure, one of them saw a ship coming over the horizon in the first light and his weak head began to buzz and make pictures; "instead of the sea, meadows stretched around him. . . . Amid the green grass, smoking vigorously from all her funnels, moved the 'Navarin.'" The details are as good as the best fiction, even stronger in that they come as a report of the company, breaking through the hush-hush whitewash slapped over other battles, as with a strong chorus of voices from below. Novikoff got the survivors together and filled a trunk with depositions, checking and counterchecking; his materials destroyed, he reconstructed them. He learned the story of the "Borodino" from the single survivor of 900, a great cool fellow who stripped to his boots and dove through a gun port when she went over. Somewhere else he got the one surviving memory of some other writhing junkyard of hot metal, careening along without officers under some ghostly helmsman, still head of the line. And so on.

[1] Tsushima, by A. Novikoff-Priboy. Translated by Eden and Cedar Paul. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 446 pages, with charts. $3.50.

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Novikoff "angles" his book occasionally, but the truth of it is implicit and abundant. Take merely his talk afterward with the Japanese master-gunner—he the prisoner curious about Japanese fire control and gunnery, the Jap answering, shrugging, much more interested in getting back to Russia. Had been a laundryman there; had a new starching device that would make him a fortune. Novikoff's mind suddenly went back *(what were we fighting?)* to the pitiless hammers that had shattered eardrums for seven hours and blown a navy to pieces, turning its strong men into grotesque screaming things and dead meat by the ton. Especially the feeling of terror, impotence, of rats in a trap. And here he faced one of the human agencies behind that murderous storm of iron, this efficient master-gunner, talking quietly on now about the starch in collars, "a little chap refilling his tiny metal pipe—a man with the most innocent smile in the world."

OTIS FERGUSON.

Charles Sanders Peirce

Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce, edited by Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 6 vols. Vol. IV, $6; Vols. I, II, III, V and VI, $5 each.

THE WORK of Charles Sanders Peirce has been a long time in coming to its own; indeed, there is every reason to believe that the process is only just beginning and to expect that its influence will grow greatly in the future. The fundamental reason for the long period of inattention is that he was ahead of his times. The "climate of opinion" was not favorable to the reception of his ideas. The intellectual and moral soil was not prepared. While this soil is hard at any given time because of preoccupations and preconceptions, it is nevertheless worked and cultivated so constantly that finally areas appear that will receive and nourish seed that would not grow earlier.

But the reason given is not the sole reason for the neglect of Peirce. It must be admitted that he flung abroad many stones, sometimes pebbles, sometimes boulders, while he was sowing germinal ideas. He mixed his anticipations of the direction in which science would move and the consequences which would ensue with matters that not only seemed fantastic at the time but that, there is every reason to suppose, will always seem fantastic. There is much that is casual and arbitrary in his writings. They exhibit a strange mixture of unusual industry and thoroughly systematic thinking with inability to carry through to completion almost every line of thought that was started. He united, one might say, a disciplined mind and an undisciplined personality. The combination is an unusual one. Its product is the appearance in his writing of not only such difficulties as may be expected when a thinker is breaking new fields, but of perplexing contradictions and a multitude of starts that get almost nowhere. Moreover, there is hardly any subject that he did not touch. What I have to say omits everything save a few leading ideas.

In consequence, Peirce will always remain a philosopher's philosopher. His ideas will reach the general public only through the mediations and translations of others. This fact is the more paradoxical because Peirce, more than any other philosopher of modern times, insisted that philosophy should begin with the common-sense world and its conclusions and terminate in application to the common-sense world. Yet he united with this point of view an extraordinarily technical approach that was not confined to technicalities of expression, which he invented *ad hoc* if he could not find them already made—as his remarkable knowledge of scholastic thought as well as of Kant often enabled him to do.

I imagine that some account of his conception of common sense and of its relation to philosophy forms the best introduction to his ideas. He did not think of Common Sense in the way the Scotch school (called by that name) thought of it. It consisted to him not so much of a body of opinions that are widely held as of the ideas that are forced upon us in the processes of living by the very nature of the world in which we live. Men may be theoretically skeptical about them, but as long as they live they act upon them. He attached basic importance therefore to what he called instincts, not as forms of knowledge but as the ways of acting out of which knowledge grows.

I recall a passage in which he says that "the instincts conducive to assimilation of food, and the instincts conducive to reproduction, must have involved from the beginning certain tendencies to think truly about physics, on the one hand, and psychics, on the other." Because man cannot live without some degree of practical adaptation to the actual conditions of the world, physical and social, man's ideas, in spite of all the extravagances with which they are embroidered, must also have some degree of natural adaptation to the world and to society. Philosophy should be, however, Critical Commonsensism, a Peirce term in which the adjective "critical" is highly important. Uncriticized common sense is both too vague to serve as a dependable guide to action in new conditions and too fixed to allow the free play of inquiry—which always begins in doubt. The first rule of reason, he says, is not to block inquiry. Uncriticized common sense is often *the* great block to inquiry.

While Peirce, in common with many other philosophers, holds that philosophy deals in some sense with what is universal, he understands that which is universal in a sense different from most philosophers. Common sense is essentially an affair of experience, but not an affair, as most previous empiricists had held, of sensations. In one passage, he describes it as consisting of those ideas and beliefs which man's *situation* forces upon him—a saying that may be thus paraphrased: It consists of the ideas and beliefs that a man must hold in order to meet in his activities the urgent and imperative demands made upon him by his situation. It follows that the universal or common subject matter of philosophy consists "of those observations which every person can make in every hour of his waking life." Although Peirce was above all a scientist and had what he called the laboratory mind as distinct from the "seminary mind," he had no sympathy with those who hold that philosophy must be based upon the conclusions of science. On the contrary, every science, according to him, rests upon taking important principles for granted. Rejecting the notion that these principles are a system of axioms or self-evident truths, the critical examination of common sense is left as the only method by which scientific principles can be organized.

It does not follow, however, that because the material of philosophy is derived from observations which every man can make, these observations are easy to make. I know of nothing that cuts deeper than his remark, "It is extremely difficult to bring our attention to elements of experience that are constantly present. . . . Roundabout devices have to be resorted to, in order to enable us to perceive what stares us in the face with a glare that, once noticed, becomes almost oppressive with its insistency." Consequently uncriticized common sense is a very mixed affair. The difficulty of seeing what its constituents are makes us believe we are

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seeing them, when in fact we are seeing through the glasses of philosophical notions that have been picked up from education and tradition.

Outside of his logical writings, the published volumes consist to a large extent of exposition of the elements that he thought were found in every experience of every man. Even his logical writings were in his own mind not separate matters, but connected, even when most formal, with common experience. One of the elements is the existence in everything whatever of potentialities that are not actualized at the time, that have not been actualized in the past, and that may not be actualized in any finite future time. Hence the continual emergence of the novel and the unpredictable. Before William James, he taught the doctrine of an Open Universe, grounding the doctrine upon every experience that anybody has.

The second main element he called actuality, taking the word in its most literal and brute sense. The "proof" of existence in general and in particular is found in the fact that we are forced to react and that things react upon us in return for our reaction to them. It is the non-intellectual, non-rational element in our experience. It cannot be explained, much less explained away. It simply *is;* we cannot leave it because we must take it. It cannot even be described in its own terms; it can only be experienced, and then indicated to others (who undergo the same brute interactions) by means of demonstrative words such as this, that, now, here, and the names for colors, sounds, etc. Our sensations are not knowledge nor a source of knowledge; they just are.

Were there no other element in experience, then thought and knowledge would be impossible. But there is a third element, for each experience contains an element of expectation, of virtual prediction. Every brute reaction has consequences that are anticipated as part of the experience. This element constitutes the phase of continuity; it is the rational element that makes reflection possible and that is the ground of knowledge, which always expresses generality. It is the business of inquiry to develop this element of foreshadowing the future contained in what is otherwise the stupidest experience. Understanding the continuity of the thing experienced with other things makes subsequent action more intelligent and this action creates in turn greater continuity, greater reasonableness, in nature. Science is manifest in activities that bring things into closer connections with one another. It is thus basically a moral enterprise. For the basic principle of morals is the growing identification of the individual with whatever modes of thought and action render the existing community still more completely a community. Such attitudes are at the opposite pole from those in which the individuals merely conform to what is already thought and done in a community. Peirce lived when the idea of evolution was uppermost in the mind of his generation. He applied it everywhere. But to him it meant, whether in the universe of nature, of science or of society, continual growth in the direction of interrelations, of what he called continuity. Since the conclusions of inquiry are valid only in so far as they may be experienced by other individuals who go through the same experimental inquiries, the existence of the community is involved in all knowledge. "The social principle is rooted intrinsically in logic"—there is no logic apart from it. Were there such a thing as a completely "rugged individualist," he would have neither language, thought nor knowledge. Hence, incidentally, the fundamental importance Peirce attached in his logical writings to signs and symbols, as well as to making all logic a logic of relatives.

Insistence upon ever growing continuity, or generality of ways of action and disposition, differentiates the pragmatism of Peirce from that of James. The latter was correct in attributing his pragmatic doctrine to Peirce as far as emphasis upon consequences and the inclusion of an element of action in all knowledge are concerned. Aside from these considerations, there are two basic differences between them. Peirce was much more of a pragmatist in the literal sense in which the word expresses action or practice. To James some action was necessary in order to ensure action; it was a necessary means. To Peirce habits of reasonable action, of general modes of action, were the end of knowledge. The fact that the consequence of knowledge is general marks the other difference. Knowledge tends to produce ways of action, and these ways of acting are immensely more important than is any particular result effected by action.

The other main aspect of Peirce's philosophy he called Probabilism, which he opposed to Infallibilism in its myriad forms. In his assertion that every scientific proposition is only probable, no matter how exact in itself and how sound the reasoning involved in reaching it, he anticipated the conclusion that science in its own development (largely against the will of scientists) has since been compelled to reach. Even the proposition that two things and two things make four things is not in any special case a perfectly certain proposition. The import of the doctrine of probabilism, in accord with the general pragmatic position, lies in the general attitudes and ways of acting that follow from its acceptance. These attitudes, like all attitudes, are moral in final account. They rule out all dogmatism, all cocksureness, all appeal to authority and ultimate first truths; they keep alive the spirit of doubt as the spring of the work of continually renewed inquiry—which is a work and not an argumentative skepticism. Science does not consist in any body of conclusions, but in the work of ever renewed inquiry, which never claims or permits finality but leads to ever renewed effort to learn. The sole ultimate justification of science as a method of inquiry is that if it is persisted in, it is self-correcting and tends to approach ever closer to stable common agreement of beliefs and ideas. Because science is the method of learning, not a settled body of truths, it is the hope of mankind.

In some respects this idea, taken pragmatically or in terms of the consequences that would result if it were generally accepted in action, is the most revolutionary of all possible ideas. It is much more revolutionary than are prescriptions for the future of social relations that rest upon acceptance of a fixed doctrine, although that doctrine be revolutionary with respect to existing conditions. The idea is so far from being accepted in current practice that in almost all quarters—among adherents of "revolutionary" political and economic doctrines as well as among those whose beliefs survive from earlier conservative ecclesiastic conceptions—it is thought to lead to almost complete uncertainty and confusion, instead of giving direction to progressive agreement and concord. Insecurity and fear make people adhere to some fixed body of social truth supposed to be already scientifically established. The conflict as to just what are the authoritative fixed truths which are to direct social action then becomes the great cause of confusion and discord which are such marked features of present social life within and among nations.

I cannot close this all too bare outline of the potential contribution of Peirce to living thought without recording the great debt of gratitude we all owe to Drs. Hartshorne and Weiss for editing Peirce's scattered papers, and to Harvard University for making possible their labors and the publication of the results. JOHN DEWEY.

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Adventure in Central Asia

News from Tartary, by Peter Fleming. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 384 pages. $3.

The Flight of "Big Horse," by Sven Hedin. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 248 pages. $3.75.

SINCE the days of Marco Polo the reading public of the Western world has sustained an unflagging interest in the caravan trails of central Asia. Its curiosity has been gratified by a long series of notable accounts from the early Catholic friars, from Abbé Huc, and more recently from Sir Aurel Stein, Sven Hedin and Owen Lattimore. The succession is ably maintained in these two new additions, one of which inducts Peter Fleming into the favored company of wanderers in Tartary. As initiation fee, he offers the rare feat of an overland journey from Peking to Kashmir, which covered the less-traveled route through Kokonor, or Chinghai, and the southern oases of Sinkiang. With no official backing—indeed, not even properly visaed passports—he and "Kini" Maillart, a Swiss woman journalist and accomplished traveler in her own right, won through the baffling preliminary delays and the dangers of the road to complete the trip in seven months. Sven Hedin's tale does not suffer by contrast. His expedition was drawn, half-unsuspecting, into the middle of a bitterly fought civil war in northern Sinkiang, from which he and several of his fellows escaped with a whole skin only by a miracle. Both volumes contain magnificent photographic illustrations: Fleming's are possibly more breathtaking, but Sven Hedin's are supplemented by his own inimitable drawings.

For sheer enjoyment, it is difficult to choose between Fleming's laughable passport difficulties in Shensi and Kansu, the breezy caravan stages on the high uplands of Chinghai, the desperate trek across the last mountain barrier into Sinkiang, or the desert stages between the Turkestan oases. His peculiar combination of talents shows to full advantage. He stumbles into escapades on every hand, his eye misses no colorful detail of character or landscape, he sees the humor in every situation—and all is set down with a lean directness and economy of effort. In the midst of maddening delays in Shensi, he notes: "As we arrived at the inn, the building next to it—an eating-house where we had breakfasted—quietly and rather sadly collapsed, crumbling into rubble in a cloud of dust. It was one of those days." Further on, with passports in question at Lanchow: "The Minister of Education called and said airily that he was sure it would be all right; he was much distressed at the small appropriation allotted to his Department in the Provincial Budget and I angled for his help at court with an assurance that I would ventilate his grievance in The Times if ever opportunity afforded." Much is still left to be told of Kini's personality and role; but we are promised her own story.

Fleming and Kini traveled "Asia at Asia's pace" in the immemorial way; Sven Hedin's was a modern expedition, moving by motor lorry. This factor was his undoing. For motor lorries were useful to army transport, and not least to General Ma Chung-yin ("Big Horse"), the Chinese Moslem leader who dreamed of an empire reaching out from Turkestan, but who was being driven into disastrous rout when Sven Hedin stumbled into the picture. Alive to every favoring circumstance, the wily Tungan general saw to it that the expedition was led into territory where the lorries might answer to his needs. As it was, the veteran Swedish campaigner scented danger and

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By Ernest J. Simmons

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all but made good his escape. That he failed is our good fortune, for an eye-witness draws aside the veil of mystery that has covered the civil war in Sinkiang. The ruthless and ambitious "Big Horse" dominates this book—most of all in his last generous gesture, when he freed lorries and drivers while they were still of value to him. But Sven Hedin promises us two more volumes: his trip to the "wandering" lake of Lop Nor, and his journey along the road that once carried China's silken treasure to ancient Rome and Renaissance Italy.

It is unfortunate that Fleming felt called upon to crusade against the Bolshevik menace in Sinkiang. His four chapters on the civil war, brief as they are, disconcertingly interrupt the flow of his personal narrative. The political struggle centered in the north, which Fleming never reached. Entering at the southeastern corner of Sinkiang, he skirted the Taklamakan desert along the southern oases from Cherchen to Kashgar. In his political chapters, he writes not of what he saw but of what he heard. Sven Hedin's reports of Soviet political activity, on the contrary, are the testimony of a witness, and they bulk much smaller than Fleming's extravaganza. His moderate conclusions are expressed in these sentences: "It does not look as if the Russians intended to occupy Sinkiang. The administration and military organization of over a million square miles of occupied territory would be too expensive. The main thing for Soviet Russia is to control the province economically and commercially, and this aim is already secured."

T. A. BISSON.

"A Matter of Generation"

My Life, by Igor Stravinsky. New York: Simon and Schuster. 288 pages. $3.

IF YOU expect any wild drumming in this, or anything shockingly personal, you will be disappointed. Igor Stravinsky clearly and coldly sets down the major facts of his career; one of his chief purposes is "to dissipate the accumulation of misunderstandings that has gathered about" his work and his life. He tries to explain how he felt at different times in the past, and gives his attitude today. He admits he cannot always remember just how he felt at the highest-pitched moments, and even the savage opening night of "Le Sacre du Printemps" is now largely a blur. But Stravinsky is straight and honest, and the directness of his writing is marred only now and then by the amateurish touch of the successful man: "I must here mention gratefully"—"The time has come to thank," etc. It would be just another autobiography if it were not for the importance of the statements about music and musicians.

Stravinsky writes with epigrammatic abruptness about Rimsky-Korsakov, Debussy, Ravel, de Falla and their work; there is plenty too about the ballet, and Diaghilev with his faults and good points is set down tolerantly, while Cocteau, Nijinsky, Picasso, Massine and others make discreet appearances. Stravinsky accuses Nijinsky of musical illiteracy, and of spoiling the solo dance at the end of "Le Sacre"; he had grasped its dramatic significance but "was incapable of giving intelligible form to its essence, and complicated it either by clumsiness or lack of understanding." The high point of the book is Stravinsky's brief but vital discussion of music itself, which he believes is "essentially powerless to *express* anything at all"—its function to him is to establish "an order of things," particularly "the coördination between *man* and *time*"—for "music is the sole domain in which man realizes the pres-

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ent." He writes frankly and without rationalization about his latest phase; he admits a slipping of popularity; since it is the young who acclaim his newer work, perhaps it is "simply a matter of generation."

Stravinsky's political views form an interesting background to many of his statements. He was of course affected by the War, though being exempt from military service he spent most of his time in Switzerland. He deplored the Revolution, and the "monstrous peace of Brest-Litovsk" left him "desperately humiliated." Still, he admits the Soviets later showed an interest in his work, though that interest has waned; a good part of his music, including the recent "Perséphone," has never been heard in the USSR. But a musician can often be a man without a country and go on composing, because his medium transcends language, though time and time again in this book the need for a patron is stressed. Certain projects would have failed but for the lucky interest of some one person —Mrs. So-and-So saved us this time, Monsieur Quelquenom was the patron saint on that occasion. Stravinsky is so deeply rooted in the old tradition that he cannot imagine a social order that will assure the artist of an organic place.

HARRY THORNTON MOORE.

Fun in Exile

The Street of the Fishing Cat, by Jolán Földes. Translated by Elizabeth Jacobi. New York: Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

IN SEARCHING for a reason why this novel should have copped the purse of $19,000 in the All-Nations (actually thirteen and Warner Brothers) Prize Novel Competition, about the only one to be found is the dust-jacket explanation that it "subtly reveals *all nations,* without for a moment indulging in propaganda." It is the story of a group of exiles living in Paris during the period from 1920 to the present, but the "revelation" of the countries they represent is subtle to the point of imperceptibility; and the author indulges in propaganda for the thesis that such characters as hers, driven from their homelands by political and economic pressure, could find that pressure entirely dissipated, the very memory of it wafted away, leaving nothing but a sweet nostalgia, upon taking up residence in and around the rue du Chat-qui-pêche.

Here Cathrina, the communist, Alvarez, the anarchist, Maura, the royalist, and half a dozen others of widely divergent views, are drawn together by a net of inconsequential and sketchily delineated happenings, and here even such drudgery as Mrs. Barabás is forced to take up is looked upon lyrically: "Oh, there is a profession—more international than soldiering and more ancient than fire kindling; the service of another, friendlier element—washing." The Barabás family had left Hungary because they couldn't make a living there, and in Paris Mrs. Barabás took up her colorful and historic profession while her husband was mostly unemployed and her daughter worked in what would be a sweatshop to almost anyone but Miss Földes, and—would you believe it?—they managed to put the two other kids through school, and Papa and Anna, the oldest daughter, took a trip to Buenos Aires and another to Hungary, both times in search of better work, and yet the family never really felt the pinch. It is a romantic picture of émigré life that ought to be acceptable to the publishers of the All-Nations—which include, in Germany, a potent factor in the advance of emigration.

CARLTON BROWN.

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Toward Greater Battles

France Faces the Future, by Ralph Fox. New York: International Publishers. 135 pages. $1.25.

France Today and the People's Front, by Maurice Thorez. New York: International Publishers. 254 pages. $1.75.

Whither France? by Leon Trotsky. Translated by John G. Wright and Harold R. Isaacs. New York: Pioneer Publishers. 160 pages. 50 cents.

THE FIRST two of these books (both written before the Blum Cabinet took power) explain the circumstances in which the People's Front movement arose in France and its political meaning. They represent the same position and use similar material. Ralph Fox, an English Communist, deals chiefly with the external aspects of the movement and gives a vivid account of its history. Maurice Thorez, a leader of the Communist Party in France, devotes the first half of his book to a detailed analysis of the social and economic background from which the People's Front emerged. In the second half, Thorez insists that when the Communists adhered to the People's Front they were not abandoning their own program. "The setting-up of soviets cannot be the immediate aim of the fight against fascism," he explains, because "only a minority of the French working class now enters the fight with the resolute determination to establish soviets." With regard to the ultimate aim pursued by the Communists, the People's Front is not a mere hypocritical maneuver, nor does it imply a fundamental change in their revolutionary policies. Thorez presents it as chiefly a method of political education, of convincing the masses of the petty bourgeoisie that their lot is intimately bound up with the lot of the working classes.

Trotsky's book is composed of five articles written at various times betwen 1934 and 1936. He violently denounces the tactics followed by the Communist Party in the People's Front. He believes the Party to be completely opposed to a true "Leninist" policy. He thunders against the alliance with the Radical Socialists: "The parliamentary bloc with the Radicals, which was a crime from the point of view of the historical interests of the proletariat, had at least a certain practical value in the restricted domain of parliamentarism. The extra-parliamentary alliance with the Radicals against fascism is not merely a crime, but an idiocy." Democracy, he thinks, is doomed, and he is against the use of democratic slogans as a method of winning the support of the petty bourgeoisie: "Democracy is only a political form. The petty bourgeoisie is not concerned with the shell but with the kernel. It wants to save itself from misery and ruin. If democracy proves impotent—then to the devil with democracy! Every petty bourgeois reasons or feels that way."

This is not the place to analyze Trotsky's general position. So far as the French events are in question, it seems that they contradict his assertion, made in the preface to the book in June, 1936, that "this pamphlet has passed the test of events." Among other things, Trotsky contended that "deceiving" the workers into "fraternizing with Radical Socialists" leads to a situation that "will be not revolutionary, but counter-revolutionary"; that "one would hardly expect a spontaneous strike wave in France, even in a period of a rise in the business cycle"; that "the relationship of forces has changed during the last year to the detriment of the proletariat"; that "the positions are being surrendered without a battle, or being prepared to surrender"; that the People's Front is "the society for insuring Radical bankrupts at the expense of working-class organizations," etc. The electoral victories of the Socialists and Communists, the enormous increase in the membership of the labor unions and the working-class parties, the strike wave in June and, recently, the protest strikes against French "neutrality" in Spain, tend on the contrary to indicate that during the last years, under the People's Front, the French workers made enormous strides toward unity and greater political awareness, and that if necessity arises for an armed conflict, they will be in a position to fight with greater cohesion and chance of success now than in 1934.

The question whether the intransigent tactics advocated by Trotsky would have resulted in still greater revolutionary gains is, at the present date, purely academic; but it is not academic when one envisages the future. Despite the certain conquests achieved under the People's Front in France, it would be stupid to believe that its existence is a guarantee of final victory under any circumstances. When Thorez warns that "there must be no illusions. The success of the People's Front will mean the recrudescence of the class struggle. The oligarchy will not surrender without a fight," etc., he assuredly is right; but nothing in his book indicates that, in these "great and imminent battles" to come, the class lines which are now blurred will necessarily become clearer, and that a situation may not arise where the support by the workers' parties of a Left coalition may go against the workers' most vital interests. Today, only a few months after Thorez' book was written and in view of Blum's scandalous policy of "neutrality" toward Spain, one is wondering whether the People's Front has not outlived its usefulness.

NORBERT GUTERMAN.

Books in Brief

Poems: 1911-1936, by John Hall Wheelock. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 265 pages. $2.50.

THIS BOOK is a selection of poems brought together by the author from his various volumes and from recent unpublished work. The poems are chiefly personal; the theme is often love remembered, requited or rejected. The reader is first impressed by Mr. Wheelock's ability to handle an easy melodious meter, which is always conventional and which never suffered from the free-verse movement. The poems, I believe, are overburdened with clichés, trite imagery and frequent generalizations. These are not always flaws in poetry, provided they are given freshness and originality by sensitive meter and provided they illustrate important themes toward which the author displays penetration, understanding and decisiveness. Such virtues, however, I have not yet found in Mr. Wheelock's verse. His love poems, for instance, are mainly poems of mood—nostalgia, longing or content—and though a problem is sometimes raised, no moral solution is given. His early poems of the city are descriptive; and his descriptions lack freshness or clarity of observation and show little sign of any definite social philosophy that would give them meaning. His indecisiveness is best shown in the late poem, "I, Too! I, Too!":

> Wild geese, wild geese, arrowing down the sky,
> Hastening, hastening, where the heavens are bare!
> I, too, would flee away—I know not why;
> I, too would hasten—but I know not where.

DON STANFORD.

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The Essays of Michel de Montaigne, translated and edited by Jacob Zeitlin. Vol. III. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 587 pages. Entire set: $13.

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Contributors

M. E. RAVAGE, the author of "An American in the Making" and other books, is an international journalist who makes his home in Paris.

EDMUND WILSON is the author, among other books, of "Axel's Castle," "The American Jitters" and "Travels in Two Democracies."

FRANCIS HACKETT, for some years one of the editors of The New Republic, is author of several books, including "Henry the Eighth," "Francis I" and a novel, "The Green Lion."

JOHN DEWEY, dean of American philosophers, is the author, among other books, of "Art as Experience," and "Liberalism and Social Action."

T. A. BISSON, Foreign Policy Association research associate, recently sailed for the Orient to study economic and political conditions in China and Japan on a Rockefeller Foundation fellowship.

HARRY THORNTON MOORE lives in Chicago, and until recently was on the staff of Ringmaster. He writes frequently for magazines in this country and England.

CARLTON BROWN, a contributor of articles and short stories to numerous magazines, is at present employed on the Federal Writers' Project in New York City.

NORBERT GUTERMAN, a resident of New York City, writes for magazines here and in Paris.

The initials signed to the brief reviews are those of Don Stanford and Ramon Guthrie.

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